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THE
DOCTRINES
AND
DISCIPLINE
OF THE
Methodist Episcopal Church.

—*—
THE TWELFTH EDITION.
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NEW-YORK:

PRINTED BY T. KIRK, NO. 48, MAIDEN-LANE, FOR THE
METHODIST SOCIETY, AND SOLD BY E. COOPER,
AND J. WILSON, AT THE BOOK ROOM.

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1804.

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XVI. *Of the Sacraments.*

SACRAMENTS ordained of Christ, are not only badges or tokens of christian men's profession : but rather they are certain signs of grace, and God's good will towards us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also, strengthen and confirm our faith in him.

There are two sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord, in the Gospel ; that is to say, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord.

Those five commonly called Sacraments ; that is to say, Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony, and extreme Unction, are not to be counted for Sacraments of the Gospel, being such as have partly grown out of the *corrupt* following of the Apostles ; and partly are states of life allowed in the Scriptures, but yet have not the like nature of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, because they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God.

The Sacraments were not ordained of Christ to be gazed upon, or to be carried about ; but that we should duly use them. And in such only as worthily receive the same, they have a wholesome effect or operation : but they that receive them unworthily, purchase to themselves condemnation, as St. Paul saith.

XVII. *Of Baptism.*

BAPTISM is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized ; but it is also a sign of regeneration, or the new birth. The baptism of young children is to be retained in the church.

XVIII. *Of the Lord's Supper.*

THE Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that christians ought to have among themselves one to another, but rather is a sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death : insomuch, that to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the same, the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ ; and likewise the cup of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christs.

Transubstantiation, or the change of the substance of bread and wine in the Supper of our Lord, cannot be proved by Holy Writ ; but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions.

The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the Supper, only after a heavenly and spiritual manner. And the mean whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper, is faith.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not by Christ's ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshipped.

XIX. *Of both Kinds.*

THE cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the lay-people : for both the parts of the Lord's Supper, by Christ's ordinance and commandment ought to be administered to all christians alike.

XX. *Of the one Oblation of Christ, finished upon the Cross.*

THE offering of Christ once made, is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual ; and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone. Wherefore the sacrifice of masses, in the

which it is commonly said that the priest doth offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, is a blasphemous fable, and dangerous deceit.

XXI. *Of the Marriage of Ministers.*

THE ministers of Christ are not commanded by God's law either to vow the estate of single life, or to abstain from marriage; therefore it is lawful for them, as for all other christians, to marry at their own discretion, as they shall judge the same to serve best to godliness.

XXII. *Of the Rites and Ceremonies of Churches.*

IT is not necessary that rites and ceremonies should in all places be the same, or exactly alike, for they have been always different, and may be changed according to the diversity of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's word.—Whosoever, through his private judgment, willingly and purposely doth openly break the rites and ceremonies of the church to which he belongs, which are not repugnant to the word of God, and are ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly that others may fear to do the like, as one that offendeth against the common order of the church, and woundeth the consciences of weak brethren.

Every particular church may ordain, change, or abolish rites and ceremonies, so that all things may be done to edification.

XXIII. *Of the Rulers of the United States of America.*

THE president, the congress, the general assemblies, the governors, and the councils of state,

as the delegates of the people, are the rulers of the United States of America, according to the division of power made to them by the constitution of the United States, and by the constitutions of their respective states. And the said states are a sovereign and independent nation, and ought not to be subject to any foreign jurisdiction.

XXIV. *Of Christian Men's Goods.*

THE riches and goods of christians are not common as touching the right, title and possession of the same, as some do falsely boast. Notwithstanding, every man ought, of such things as he possesseth, liberally to give alms to the poor, according to his ability.

XXV. *Of a Christian Man's Oath.*

AS we confess that vain and rash swearing is forbidden christian men by our Lord Jesus Christ and James his apostle; so we judge that the christian religion doth not prohibit, but that a man may swear when the magistrate requireth, in a cause of faith and charity, so it be done according to the prophet's teaching, in justice, judgment, and truth.

SECTION III.

Of the General and Yearly Conferences.

IT is desired that all things be considered on these occasions, as in the immediate presence of God: That every person speak freely whatever is in his heart.

Quest. 1. How may we best improve our time at the conferences?

Ans. 1. While we are conversing, let us have an especial care to set God always before us.

2. In the intermediate hours, let us redeem all the time we can for private exercises.

3. Therein let us give ourselves to prayer for one another, and for a blessing on our labour.

Quest. 2. Who shall compose the general conference?

Answ. All the preachers, who shall have travelled four years, from the time that they were received on trial by an annual conference, and are in full connection, at the time of holding the conference.

Quest. 3. Who shall attend the yearly conferences?

Answ. All the travelling preachers, who are in full connection, and those who are to be received into full connection.

Quest. 4. Who shall appoint the times of holding the yearly conferences?

Answ. The bishops, but they shall allow the annual conference to sit a week at least.

Quest. 5. Who shall appoint the place of holding the annual conference?

Answ. Each annual conference shall appoint the place of its own sitting.

Quest. 6. What is the method wherein we usually proceed in the yearly conferences?

Answ. We enquire,

1. What preachers are admitted on trial?
2. Who remain on trial?
3. Who are admitted into full connection?
4. Who are the deacons?
5. Who are the elders?
6. Who have been elected, by the suffrages of the general conference, to exercise the episcopal office, and superintend the Methodist episcopal church in America?
7. Who are located this year, through weakness of body, or family concerns?

8. Who are the supernumerary, superannuated and worn out preachers.*
9. Who have died this year?
10. Are all the preachers blameless in life and conversation?
11. Who are expelled from the connection?
12. What numbers are in society?
13. Where are the preachers stationed this year?
14. What has been collected for the contingent expenses, for the making up the allowances of the preachers, &c.
15. How has this been expended?
16. Where and when shall our next conference be held?

Quest. 7. Is there any other business to be done in the yearly conferences?

Answ. The electing and ordaining of elders and deacons.

Quest. 8. Are there any other directions to be given concerning the yearly conferences?

Answ. There shall be seven conferences in the year. See Second Part, Sect. 1.

A record of the proceedings of each annual conference shall be kept, by a secretary, chosen for that purpose, and shall be signed by the president and secretary: and let a copy of the said record be sent to the general conference.

SECTION IV.

Of the Election and Consecration of Bishops, and of their Duty.

Quest. 1. **H**OW is a bishop to be constituted?

Answ. By the Election of the general conference, and the laying on of the hands

* A supernumerary preacher is one so worn out in the itinerant service, as to be rendered incapable of preaching constantly; but, at the same time is willing to do any work in the ministry, which the conference may direct, and his strength enable him to perform.

of three bishops, or at least of one bishop and two elders.

Quest. 2. If by death, expulsion, or otherwise, there be no bishop remaining in our church, what shall we do?

Ans. w. The general conference shall elect a bishop; and the elders, or any three of them, who shall be appointed by the general conference for that purpose shall ordain him according to our form of ordination.

Quest. 3. What are the duties of a bishop?

Ans. w. 1. To preside in our conferences.

2. To fix the appointments of the preachers for the several circuits, provided he shall not allow any preacher to remain in the same station more than two years successively; excepting the presiding elders, the editor and general book steward, the assistant editor and general book steward, the supernumerary, superannuated and worn out preachers.

3. In the intervals of the conferences, to change, receive and suspend preachers, as necessity may require and as the discipline directs.

4. To travel through the connection at large.

5. To oversee the spiritual and temporal business of the societies.

6. To ordain bishops, elders, and deacons.

Quest. 4. To whom is a bishop amenable for his conduct?

Ans. w. To the general conference, who have power to expel him for improper conduct, if they see it necessary.

Quest. 5. What provision shall be made for the trial of a bishop if he should be accused of immorality in the interval of the general conference?

Ans. w. If a bishop be accused of immorality, three travelling elders shall call upon him, and examine him on the subject; and if the three elders verily believe that the bishop is guilty of the crime, they shall call to their aid two presiding elders, from two dis-

tracts in the neighbourhood of that where the crime was committed, each of which presiding elders shall bring with him two elders, or an elder and a deacon. The above mentioned nine persons shall form a conference, to examine into the charge brought against the bishop; and if two-thirds of them verily believe him to be guilty of the crime laid to his charge, they shall have authority to suspend the bishop till the ensuing general conference, and the districts shall be regulated in the mean time as is provided in the third section; but no accusation shall be received against a bishop except it be delivered in writing, signed by those who are to prove the crime; and a copy of the accusation shall be given to the accused bishop.

Quest. 6. If a bishop cease from travelling at large among the people, shall he still exercise his episcopal office among us in any degree?

Ans. w. If he cease from travelling without the consent of the general conference, he shall not hereafter exercise the episcopal office in our church.

The bishops have obtained liberty, by the suffrages of the conference, to ordain local preachers to the office of deacons; provided, they obtain a testimonial from the society to which they belong, and from the stewards of the circuit, signed also by nine travelling preachers; three of whom shall be elders; three others, elders or deacons; and the other three, elders, deacons or preachers.

SECTION V.

Of the Presiding Elders, and of their Duty.

Quest. 1. **B**Y whom are the presiding elders to be chosen?

Ans. w. By the bishops.

Quest. 2. What are the duties of a presiding elder?

Ans. w. 1. To travel through his appointed district.

2. In the absence of a bishop, to take charge of all the elders, and deacons, travelling and local preachers, and exhorters in his district.

3. To change, receive, and suspend preachers in his district during the intervals of the conferences, and in the absence of a bishop, as the discipline directs.

4. In the absence of a bishop, to preside in the conference, but in case there are two or more presiding elders belonging to one conference, the bishop or bishops, may by letter or otherwise appoint the president; but if no appointment be made, or if the presiding elder appointed do not attend, the conference shall in either of these cases elect the president by ballot, without debate from among the presiding elders.

5. To be present, as far as practicable, at all the quarterly meetings; and to call together at each quarterly meeting a quarterly meeting conference, consisting of all the travelling and local preachers, exhorters, stewards, and leaders of the circuit and none else, to hear complaints, and to receive and try appeals. The quarterly meeting conference shall appoint a secretary to take down the proceedings of the quarterly meeting conference, in a book kept by one of the stewards of the circuit for that purpose.

6. To oversee the spiritual and temporal business of the societies in his district.

7. To take care that every part of our discipline be enforced in his district.

8. To attend the bishops when present in his district; and to give them, when absent, all necessary information, by letter, of the state of his district.

Quest. 3. By whom are the presiding elders to be stationed and changed?

Ans. By the bishops.

Quest. 4. How long may the bishops allow an elder to preside in the same district.

Ans. For any term not exceeding four years successively.

Quest. 5. Shall the presiding elder have power to employ a preacher who has been rejected at the previous annual conference?

Ans. w. He shall not, unless the conference should give him liberty under certain conditions.

Quest. 6. How shall the presiding elders be supported?

Ans. w. If there be a surplus of the public money, in one or more circuits in his district, he shall receive such surplus; provided, he do not receive more than his annual salary. In case of a deficiency in his salary, after such surplus is paid him, or if there be no surplus, he shall share with the preachers of his district, in proportion with what they have respectively received, so that he receive no more than the amount of his salary upon the whole: he shall be accountable to the annual conference for what he receives as his salary.

SECTION VI.

Of the Election and Ordination of travelling Elders, and of their Duty.

Quest. 1. **H**OW is an *Elder* constituted?

Ans. w. By the election of a majority of the yearly conference, and by the laying on of the hands of a bishop, and of the elders that are present.

Quest. 2. What is the duty of a travelling elder?

Ans. w. 1. To administer baptism and the Lord's supper, and to perform the office of matrimony, and all parts of divine worship.

2. To do all the duties of a travelling preacher.

No elder that ceases to travel, without the consent of the yearly conference, certified under the hand of the president of the conference, except in case of sickness, debility, or other unavoidable circumstance, shall, on any account exercise the peculiar functions of his office or even be allowed to preach among us; nevertheless, the final determination in all such cases is with the yearly conference.

SECTION VII.

Of the Election and Ordination of Travelling Deacons, and of their Duty.

Quest. 1. **H**OW is a travelling deacon constituted?
Ans. By the election of the majority of the yearly conference, and the laying on of the hands of a bishop.

Quest. 2. What is the duty of a travelling deacon?

Ans. 1. To baptise, and perform the office of matrimony, in the absence of the elder.

2. To assist the elder in administering the Lord's supper.

3. To do all the duties of a travelling preacher.

Quest. 3. What shall be the time of probation of a travelling deacon for the office of an elder?

Ans. Every travelling deacon shall exercise that office for two years, before he be eligible to the office of an elder; except in the case of missions, when the yearly conferences shall have authority to elect for the elder's office sooner, if they judge it expedient.

No deacon who ceases to travel without the consent of the yearly conference, certified under the hand of the president of the conference, except in case of sickness, debility, or other unavoidable circumstance, shall, on any account, exercise the peculiar functions of his office, or even be allowed to preach among us; nevertheless, the final determination in all such cases is with the yearly conference.

SECTION VIII.

Of the Method of receiving Preachers, and of their Duty.

Quest. 1. **H**OW is a preacher to be received?

Ans. 1. By the yearly conference.
 2. In the interval of the conference, by a bishop,

or the presiding elder of the district, until the sitting of the conference.

3. When his name is not printed in the minutes, he must receive a written licence from a bishop or presiding elder.

Quest. 2. What is the duty of a preacher?

Answ. 1. To preach.

2. To meet the societies, classes, and general bands.

3. To visit the sick.

4. To preach in the morning, where he can get hearers.—We recommend morning preaching at five o'clock in the summer, and six in the winter, wherever it is practicable.

Quest. 3. What are the directions given to a preacher?

Answ. 1. Be diligent. Never be unemployed; never be triflingly employed. Never trifle away time; neither spend any more time at any place than is strictly necessary.

2. Be serious. Let your motto be, *Holiness to the Lord*. Avoid all lightness, jesting, and foolish talking.

3. Converse sparingly, and conduct yourselves prudently with women. 1 Timothy, v. 2.

4. Take no step towards marriage without first consulting with your brethren.

5. Believe evil of no one without good evidence; unless you see it done, take heed how you credit it. Put the best construction on every thing. You know the judge is always supposed to be on the prisoner's side.

6. Speak evil of no one; because your word, especially, would eat as doth a canker. Keep your thoughts within your own breast, till you come to the person concerned.

7. Tell every one under your care, what you think wrong in his conduct and temper, and that lovingly and plainly, as soon as may be: else it will

fester in your heart. Make all haste to cast the fire out of your bosom.

8. Avoid all affectation. A preacher of the gospel is the servant of all.

9. Be ashamed of nothing but sin.

10. Be punctual. Do every thing exactly at the time. And do not mend our rules, but keep them ; not for wrath but conscience' sake.

11. You have nothing to do but to save souls. Therefore spend and be spent in this work. And go always not only to those that want you, but to those that want you most.

Observe ! it is not your business only to preach so many times, and to take care of this or that society : But to save as many as you can ; to bring as many sinners as you can to repentance, and with all your power to build them up in that holiness, without which they cannot see the Lord. And remember ! A Methodist preacher is to mind every point, great and small, in the Methodist discipline ! Therefore you will need to exercise all the sense and grace you have.

12. Act in all things, not according to your own will, but as a son in the gospel. As such it is your duty to employ your time in the manner which we direct : in preaching and visiting from house to house : in reading, meditation, and prayer. Above all, if you labour with us in the Lord's vineyard, it is needful you should do that part of the work which we advise, at those times and places which we judge most for his glory.

Quest. 4. What method do we use in receiving a preacher at the conference ?

Answ. After solemn fasting and prayer, every person proposed shall then be asked, before the conference, the following questions (with any others which may be thought necessary) viz. Have you faith in Christ ? Are you going on to perfection ? Do you expect to be made perfect in love in this life ? Are

you groaning after it? Are you resolved to devote yourself wholly to God and his work? Do you know the rules of society? Of the bands? Do you keep them? Do you constantly attend the sacrament? Have you read the form of discipline? Are you willing to conform to it? Have you considered the rules of a preacher; especially the first, tenth, and twelfth? Will you keep them for conscience' sake? Are you determined to employ all your time in the work of God? Will you endeavour not to speak too long or too loud? Will you diligently instruct the children in every place? Will you visit from house to house? Will you recommend fasting or abstinence, both by precept and example? Are you in debt?

We may then, if he give us satisfaction, receive him as a probationer, by giving him the form of discipline, inscribed thus: To A. B. "*You think it your duty to call sinners to repentance. Make full proof hereof, and we shall rejoice to receive you as a fellow-labourer.*" Let him then carefully read and weigh what is contained therein; that if he have any doubt, it may be removed. Observe! Taking on trial is entirely different from admitting a preacher into full communion. One on trial may be either admitted or rejected, without doing him any wrong; otherwise it would be no trial at all. Let every one that has the charge of a circuit, explain this to those who are on trial, as well as to those who are in future to be proposed for trial.

But no one shall be received on trial, unless he first procure a recommendation from the quarterly meeting of his circuit.

After two years' probation, which is to commence from his being received on trial at the yearly conference, being approved by the yearly conference, and examined by the president of the conference, he may be received into full connection, by giving him the form of discipline inscribed thus: *As long as*

you freely consent to, and earnestly endeavour to walk by these rules, we shall rejoice to acknowledge you as a fellow-labourer. If any preacher absent himself from his circuit without the leave of the presiding elder, the presiding elder shall, as far as possible, fill his place with another preacher, who shall be paid for his labours out of the salary of the absent preacher in proportion to the usual allowance.

SECTION IX.

Of the Duties of those who have the Charge of Circuits.

Quest. 1. **W**HAT are the duties of the elder, deacon, or preacher, who has the special charge of a circuit?

Answ. 1. To see that the other preachers in his circuit behave well, and want nothing.

2. To renew the tickets quarterly and regulate the bands.

3. To meet the stewards and leaders, as often as possible.

4. To appoint all the stewards and leaders, and change them when he sees it necessary.

5. To receive, try, and expel members according to the form of discipline.

6. To hold watch-nights and love-feasts.

7. To hold quarterly meetings in the absence of the presiding elder.

8. To take care that every society be duly supplied with books.

9. To take an exact account of the numbers in society, in their respective circuits, and deliver in such account to the annual conference, that they may be printed in the minutes.

10. To send an account of his circuit, every quarter, to his presiding elder.

11. To meet the men and women apart in the

large societies, once a quarter, wherever it is practicable.

12. To overlook the accounts of all the stewards.

13. To appoint a person to receive the quarterly collection in the *classes*.

14. To see that *public* collections be made quarterly, if need be.

15. To raise a yearly subscription in those circuits that can bear it, for building churches, and paying the debts of those which have been already erected,

16. To choose a committee of lay-members to make a just application of the money, where it is most wanted.

Quest 2. What other directions shall we give him?

Ans. Several:

1. To take a regular catalogue of the societies in towns and cities, as they live in streets.

2. To leave his successor a particular account of the state of the circuit.

3. To see that every band-leader have the rules of the bands.

4. To enforce, vigorously, but calmly, all the rules of the society.

5. As soon as there are four men or women believers in any place, to put them into a band.

6. To suffer no love-feast to last above an hour and a half.

7. To warn all, from time to time, that none are to remove from one circuit to another, without a note of recommendation from a preacher of the circuit, in these words: "*A. B. the bearer, has been an acceptable member of our society in C.*" and to inform them, that, without such a certificate, they will not be received into other societies

8. To recommend every where decency and cleanliness.

9. To read the rules of the society, with the aid of the other preachers, once a year in every congregation, and once a quarter in every society.

10. On any dispute between two or more of the members of our society, concerning the payment of debts or otherwise, which cannot be settled by the parties concerned, the preacher who has the charge of the circuit, shall inquire into the circumstances of the case ; and, having consulted the stewards and leaders, shall, if agreeable to their advice, recommend to the contending parties a reference consisting of one arbiter chosen by the plaintiff, and another chosen by the defendant ; which two arbiters so chosen shall nominate a third ; the three arbiters being members of our society.

But if one of the parties be dissatisfied with the judgment given, such party may apply to the ensuing quarterly meeting of the circuit, for allowance to have a *second* arbitration appointed ; and if the quarterly meeting see sufficient reason, they shall grant a *second* arbitration, in which case, each party shall choose two arbiters, and the four arbiters shall choose a fifth, the judgment of the majority of whom shall be final ; and any party refusing to abide by such judgment, shall be excluded the society.

And if any member of our society shall refuse, in cases of debt or other disputes, to refer the matter to arbitration, when recommended by him who has the charge of the circuit, with the approbation of the stewards and leaders ; or shall enter into a lawsuit with another member before these measures are taken, he shall be expelled.

The preachers who have the oversight of circuits are required to execute all our rules fully and strenuously against all frauds, and particularly against dishonest insolvencies ; suffering none to remain in our society, on any account, who are found guilty of any fraud.

To prevent scandal, when any of our members fail in business, or contract debts which they are not able to pay, let two or three judicious members of the society inspect the accounts of the supposed

delinquent; and if he have behaved dishonestly, or borrowed money without a probability of paying, let him be expelled.

11. The preacher who has the charge of a circuit, shall appoint prayer-meetings wherever he can, in his circuit.

12. He shall take care that a fast be held in every society in his circuit, on the Friday preceding every quarterly meeting; and that a memorandum of it be written on all the class-papers.

13. He shall also take care, that no unordained local preacher or exhorter in his circuit shall officiate in public, without first obtaining a licence from the presiding elder or himself. Let every unordained local preacher and exhorter take care to have this renewed yearly; and let him who has the charge of the circuit, insist upon it.

SECTION X.

Of the Trial of those who think they are moved by the Holy Ghost to preach.

Quest. **H**OW shall we try those who profess to be moved by the Holy Ghost to preach?

Answ. 1. Let the following questions be asked, viz. Do they know God as a pardoning God? Have they the love of God abiding in them? Do they desire and seek nothing but God? And are they holy in all manner of conversation?

2. Have they gifts (as well as grace) for the work? Have they (in some tolerable degree) a clear, sound understanding, a right judgment in the things of God, a just conception of salvation by faith? And has God given them any degree of utterance? Do they speak justly, readily, clearly?

3. Have they fruit? Are any truly convinced of sin, and converted to God, by their preaching?

As long as these three marks concur in any one, we believe he is called of God to preach. These we receive as sufficient proof that he is moved by the Holy Ghost,

SECTION XI.

*Of the Matter and Manner of Preaching,
and of other public Exercises.*

Quest. 1. **W**HAT is the best general method of preaching?

Ans. 1. To convince : 2. To offer Christ : 3. To invite : 4. To build up : And to do this in some measure in every sermon.

Quest. 2. What is the most effectual way of preaching Christ.

Ans. The most effectual way of preaching Christ, is to preach him in all his offices ; and to declare his law, as well as his gospel, both to believers and unbelievers. Let us strongly and closely insist upon inward and outward holiness in all its branches.

Quest. 3. Are there any smaller advices, which might be of use to us ?

Ans. Perhaps these : 1. Be sure never to disappoint a congregation. 2. Begin at the time appointed. 3. Let your whole deportment be serious, weighty, and solemn. 4. Always suit your subject to your audience. 5. Choose the plainest text you can. 6. Take care not to ramble, but keep to your text, and make out what you take in hand. 7. Take care of any thing awkward or affected, either in your gesture, phrase, or pronounciation. 8. It is recommended to the yearly conferences to caution and restrict our preachers from improper publications. 9. Do not usually pray *extempore* above eight or ten minutes (at most) without intermission. 10. Frequently read and enlarge upon a portion of scripture ; and let young preachers often exhort without taking a text. 11. Always avail yourself of the great festivals, by preaching on the occasion.

SECTION XII.

Of the duty of Preachers to God, themselves, and one another.

Quest. 1. **H**OW shall a Preacher be qualified for his charge?

Ans. w. By walking closely with God, and having his work greatly at heart : And by understanding and loving discipline, ours in particular.

Quest. 2. Do we sufficiently watch over each other?

Ans. w. We do not. Should we not frequently ask each other, Do you walk closely with God? Have you now fellowship with the Father and the Son? At what hour do you rise? Do you punctually observe the morning and evening hour of retirement? Do you spend the day in the manner which the conference advises? Do you converse seriously, usefully, and closely? To be more particular; Do you use all the means of grace yourself, and enforce the use of them on all other persons? They are either instituted or prudential.

I. The instituted are,

1. Prayer; private, family, public; consisting of deprecation, petition, intercession, and thanksgiving. Do you use each of these? Do you forecast daily wherever you are, to secure time for private devotion? Do you practise it every where? Do you ask every where, Have you family-prayer? Do you ask individuals, Do you use private prayer every morning and evening in particular?

2. Searching the scriptures, by

(1) Reading; constantly, some part of every day: regularly, all the Bible in order; carefully, with notes; seriously, with prayer before and after: fruitfully, immediately practising what you learn there?

(2) Meditating: At set times? By rule?

(3) Hearing : Every opportunity ? With prayer before, at, after ? Have you a bible always about you ?

3. The Lord's supper : Do you use this at every opportunity ? With solemn prayer before ? With earnest and deliberate self-devotion ?

4. Fasting : Do you use as much abstinence and fasting every week, as your health, strength, and labour will permit ?

5. Christian conference : Are you convinced how important and how difficult it is to order your conversation aright ? Is it always in grace ? Seasoned with salt ? Meet to minister grace to the hearers ? Do you not converse too long at a time ? Is not an hour commonly enough ? Would it not be well always to have a determinate end in view ? And to pray before and after it ?

II. Prudential means we may use either as christians, as Methodists, or as preachers.

1. As christians : What particular rules have you in order to grow in grace ? What arts of holy living ?

2. As Methodists : do you never miss your class or band ?

3. As Preachers : have you thoroughly considered your duty ? And do you make a conscience of executing every part of it ? Do you meet every society ? Also, the leaders and bands ?

These means may be used without fruit. But there are some means which cannot ; namely, watching, denying ourselves, taking up our cross, exercise of the presence of God.

1. Do you steadily watch against the world ? Yourself ? Your besetting sin ?

2. Do you deny yourself every useless pleasure of sense ? Imagination ? Honour ? Are you temperate in all things ? Instance in food. (1) Do you use only that kind, and that degree, which is best both for your body and soul ? Do you see the necessity of this ? (2) Do you eat no more at each meal than is

necessary? Are you not heavy or drowsy after dinner? (3) Do you use only that kind and that degree of drink which is best both for your body and soul? (4) Do you choose and use water for your common drink? And only take wine medicinally or sacramentally?

3. Wherein do you take up your cross daily? Do you cheerfully bear your cross, however grievous to nature, as a gift of God, and labour to profit thereby?

4. Do you endeavour to set God always before you? To see his eye continually fixed upon you? Never can you use these means, but a blessing will ensue. And the more you use them, the more you will grow in grace.

SECTION XIII.

Rules by which we should continue, or desist from Preaching at any Place.

Quest. 1. **I**S it advisable for us to preach in as many places as we can, without forming any societies?

Ans. By no means: We have made the trial in various places; and that for a considerable time. But all the seed has fallen by the way-side. There is scarce any fruit remaining.

Quest. 2. Where should we endeavour to preach most?

Ans. 1. Where there are the greatest number of quiet and willing hearers.

2. Where there is the most fruit.

Quest. 3. Ought we not diligently to observe, in what places God is pleased at any time to pour out his Spirit more abundantly?

Ans. We ought: And at that time, to send more labourers than usual into that part of the harvest.

SECTION XIV.

Of visiting from House to House, guarding against those Sins that are so common to Professors, and enforcing Practical Religion.

Quest. 1. **H**OW can we further assist those under our care?

Ans. By instructing them at their own houses. What unspeakable need is there of this! The world says, "*The Methodists are no better than other people.*" This is not true in the general: But, 1. Personal religion, either toward God or man, is too superficial amongst us. We can but just touch on a few particulars. How little faith is there among us? How little communion with God? How little living in heaven, walking in eternity, deadness to every creature? How much love of the world. Desire of pleasure, of ease, of getting money? How little brotherly love? What continual judging one another? What gossiping, evil speaking, tale-bearing? What want of moral honesty? To instance only one particular; who does as he would be done by, in buying and selling?

2. Family religion is wanting in many branches. And what avails public preaching alone, though we could preach like angels? We must, yea, every travelling preacher must instruct the people from house to house. Till this be done, and that in good earnest, the Methodists will be no better.

Our religion is not deep, universal, uniform: but superficial, partial, uneven. It will be so till we spend half as much time in this visiting, as we now do in talking uselessly. Can we find a better method of doing this than Mr. Baxter's? If not, let us adopt it without delay. His whole tract, entitled, *Gildas Salvianus*, is well worth a careful perusal. Speaking of this visiting from house to house, he says (p. 351.)

"We shall find many hindrances, both in ourselves and the people.

1. In ourselves, there is much dulness and laziness, so that there will be much ado to get us to be faithful in the work.

2. We have a base, man-pleasing temper, so that we let men perish rather than lose their love: we let them go quietly to hell, lest we should offend them.

3. Some of us have also a foolish bashfulness. We know not how to begin, and blush to contradict the devil.

4. But the greatest hindrance is weakness of faith. Our whole motion is weak, because the spring of it is weak.

5. Lastly, we are unskilful in the work. How few know how to deal with men, so as to get within them, and suit all our discourse to their several conditions and tempers: To choose the fittest subjects, and follow them with a holy mixture of seriousness, terror, love and meekness?

But undoubtedly this private application is implied in those solemn words of the apostle, *I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, preach the word; be instant in season, out of season: Reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering.*

O brethren, if we could but set this work on foot in all our societies, and prosecute it zealously, what glory would redound to God! If the common lukewarmness were banished, and every shop and every house busied in speaking of the word and works of God; surely God would dwell in our habitations, and make us his delight.

And this is absolutely necessary to the welfare of our people, some of whom neither repent nor believe to this day. Look round, and see how many of them are still in apparent danger of damnation. And how can you walk, and talk, and be merry with

such people, when you know their case ? When you look them in the face, you should break forth into tears, as the prophet did when he looked upon Hazeael, and then set on them with the most vehement exhortations. O, for God's sake, and the sake of poor souls, bestir yourselves, and spare no pains that may conduce to their salvation !

What cause have we to bleed before the Lord, that we have so long neglected this good work ! If we had but engaged in it sooner, how many more might have been brought to Christ ? And how much holier and happier might our societies have been before now ? And why might we not have done it sooner ? There were many hindrances : And so there are always will be. But the greatest hindrance is in ourselves, in our littleness of faith and love.

But it is objected, I. " This will take up so much time, we shall not have leisure to follow our studies." We answer, 1. Gaining knowledge is a good thing, but saving souls is a better. 2. By this very thing you will gain the most excellent knowledge, that of God and eternity. 3. You will have time for gaining other knowledge too. Only sleep not more than you need : " and never be idle, or triflingly employed." But, 4. If you can do but one, let your studies alone. We ought to throw by all the libraries in the world, rather than be guilty of the loss of one soul.

It is objected, II. " The people will not submit to it." If some will not, others will. And the success with them, will repay all your labour. O let us herein follow the example of St. Paul. 1. For our general business, *Serving the Lord with all humility of mind* : 2. Our special work, *Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock* : 3. Our doctrine, *Repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ* : 4. The place, *I have taught you publicly, and from house to house* : 5. The object and manner of teaching, *I ceased not to warn every one, night and day,*

with tears : 6. His innocence and self-denial herein, I have coveted no man's silver or gold : 7. His patience, Neither count I my life dear unto myself. And among all other motives, let these be ever before our eyes : 1. The church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. 2. Grievous wolves shall enter in ; yea, of yourselves shall men arise, speaking perverse things.

Write this upon your hearts, and it will do you more good than twenty year's study. Then you will have no time to spare : You will have work enough. Then likewise no preacher will stay with us who is as salt that has lost its savour. For to such, this employment would be mere drudgery. And in order to it you will have need of all the knowledge you can procure, and grace you can attain.

The sum is, Go into every house in course, and teach every one therein, young and old, to be christians inwardly and outwardly ; make every particular plain to their understandings ; fix it in their minds ; write it on their hearts. In order to this, there must be line upon line, precept upon precept. What patience, what love, what knowledge is requisite for this ! We must needs do this, were it only to avoid idleness. Do we not loiter away many hours in every week ? Each try himself : No idleness is consistent with a growth in grace. Nay, without exactness in redeeming time, you cannot retain the grace you received in justification.

Quest. 2. Why are we not more holy, why do we not live in eternity. Walk with God all the day long ? Why are we not all devoted to God ? Breathing the whole spirit of missionaries ?

Ansiv. Chiefly because we are enthusiasts : looking for the end without using the means. To touch only upon two or three instances : Who of us rises at four, or even at five, when we do not preach ? Do we know the obligation and benefit of fasting or abstinence ? How often do we practise it ? The neglect of this

alone is sufficient to account for our feebleness and faintness of spirit. We are continually grieving the Holy Spirit of God by the habitual neglect of a plain duty. Let us amend from this hour.

Quest. 3. How shall we guard against sabbath-breaking, evil-speaking, unprofitable conversation, lightness, expensiveness or gaiety of apparel, and contracting debts without due care to discharge them

Ans. 1. Let us preach expressly on each of these heads. 2. Read in every society the sermon on evil-speaking. 3. Let the leaders closely examine and exhort every person to put away the accursed thing. 4. Let the preachers warn every society, that none who is guilty herein, can remain with us. 5. Extirpate buying or selling goods which have not paid the duty laid upon them by government, out of every society. Let none remain with us who will not totally abstain from this evil in every kind and degree. Extirpate bribery, receiving any thing directly or indirectly, for voting at any election. Shew no respect to persons herein, but expel all that touch the accursed thing. And strongly advise our people to discountenance all treats given by candidates before or at elections, and not to be partakers, in any respect, of such iniquitous practices.

SECTION XV.

Of the Instruction of Children.

Quest. **W**HAT shall we do for the rising generation?

Ans. 1. Let him who is zealous for God and the souls of men begin now.

2. Where there are ten children, whose parents are in society, meet them an hour once a week: but where this is impracticable, meet them once in two weeks.

3. Procure our instructions or catechism for them

and let all who can, read and commit them to memory.

4. Explain and impress them upon their hearts.

5. Talk with them every time you see any at home.

6. Pray earnestly for them; And diligently instruct and exhort all parents at their own houses.

7. Let the elders, deacons, and preachers, take a list of the names of the children; and if any of them be truly awakened, let them be admitted into society.

8. Preach expressly on education: "But I have no gift for this." Pray earnestly for the gift, and use every other means to attain it.

SECTION XVI.

Of employing our Time profitably, when we are not travelling, or engaged in public Exercises.

Quest. 1. **W**HAT general method of employing our time shall we advise?

Ans. We advise you, 1. As often as possible, to rise at four. 2. From four to five in the morning and from five to six in the evening, to meditate, pray, and read the scriptures with notes, and the closely practical parts of what Mr. Wesley has published. 3. From six in the morning till twelve (allowing an hour for breakfast) read, with much prayer, some of our best religious tracts.

Quest. 2. Why is it that the people under our care are not better?

Ans. Other reasons may concur; but the chief is, because we are not more knowing and more holy.

Quest. 3. But why are we not more knowing?

Ans. Because we are idle. We forget our first rule, "Be diligent. Never be unemployed. Never be triflingly employed; neither spend any more time at any place than is strictly necessary." We fear there is altogether a fault in this matter, and that

few of us are clear. Which of us spend as many hours a day in God's work, as we did formerly in man's work? We talk, talk—or read what comes next to hand. We must, absolutely must, cure this evil, or betray the cause of God. But how? 1. Read the most useful books, and that regularly and constantly. 2. Steadily spend all the morning in this employment, or at least five hours in four and twenty. "But I have no taste for reading." Contract a taste for it by use, or return to your former employment. "But I have no books." Be diligent to spread the books, and you will have the use of them.

SECTION XVII.

Of the Necessity of Union among ourselves.

LET us be deeply sensible (from what we have known) of the evil of a division in principle, spirit, or practice, and the dreadful consequences to ourselves and others. If we are united, what can stand before us? If we divide, we shall destroy ourselves, the work of God, and the souls of our people.

Quest. What can be done in order to a closer union with each other?

Ans. 1. Let us be deeply convinced of the absolute necessity of it.

2. Pray earnestly for, and speak freely to each other.

3. When we meet, let us never part without prayer.

4. Take great care not to despise each others gifts.

5. Never speak lightly of each other.

6. Let us defend each other's character in every thing, so far as is consistent with truth.

7. Labour, in honour, each to prefer the other before himself.

8. We recommend a serious perusal of *The Causes, Evils, and Cures of Heart and Church Divisions.*

SECTION XVIII.

*Of the method by which immoral travelling Ministers or Preachers shall be brought to trial, found guilty, and reprov'd or suspended in the Intervals of the conferences.**

Quest. 1. **W**HAT shall be done when an elder, deacon, or preacher, is under the report of being guilty of some crime, expressly forbidden in the word of God, as an unchristian practice sufficient to exclude a person from the kingdom of grace and glory?

Ans. Let the presiding elder, in the absence of a bishop, call as many ministers as he shall think fit; at least three, and if possible bring the accused and accuser face to face. If the person be clearly convicted, he shall be suspended from all official services in the church, till the ensuing yearly conference; at which his case shall be fully considered and determined. But if the accused be a *presiding* elder, the preachers must call in the presiding elder, of the neighbouring district, who is required to attend, and preside at the trial.

If the accused and accuser cannot be brought face to face, but the supposed delinquent flees from trial, it shall be received as a presumptive proof of guilt; and out of the mouth of two or three witnesses he shall be condemned. Nevertheless, even in that case the yearly conference shall re-consider and determine the whole matter.

Quest. 2. What shall be done in cases of improper tempers, words, or actions?

Ans. The person so offending shall be reprehended by his senior in office. Should a second transgression take place, one, two, or three ministers or

* For the trial of a bishop, see section IV.

preachers are to be taken as witnesses. If he be not then cured, he shall be tried at the next yearly conference, and, if found guilty and impenitent, shall be expelled from the connection, and his name so returned in the minutes of the conference.

Quest. 3. What shall be done with those ministers or preachers, who hold and preach doctrines which are contrary to our articles of religion?

Answ. Let the same process be observed as in cases of gross immorality: but if the minister or preacher so offending do solemnly engage, neither to preach nor defend such erroneous doctrines in public or in private, he shall be borne with, till his case be laid before the next yearly conference, which shall determine the matter.

Provided nevertheless, that in all the above-mentioned cases of trial and conviction, an appeal to the ensuing general conference shall be allowed.

SECTION XIX.

How to provide for the Circuits in the Time of conference, and to preserve and increase the Work of God.

Quest. **W**HAT can be done to supply the circuits during the sitting of the conference?

Answ. 1. Let all the appointments stand according to the plan of the circuit.

2. Engage as many local preachers and exhorters as will supply them; and let them be paid for their time in proportion to the salary of the travelling preachers.

3. If preachers and exhorters cannot attend, let some person of ability be appointed in every society to sing, pray, and read one of Mr. Wesley's sermons.

4. But if that cannot be done, Let there be prayer-meetings.

SECTION XX.

Of the Local Preachers.

Quest. 1. **W**HAT directions shall be given concerning our brethren, the local preachers, in respect to their being received as preachers, or admitted into the order of deacons?

Ans. 1. No local preacher shall receive a license to preach, till he has been examined and approved at the quarterly meeting of his circuit; which license shall be drawn up in the following words, signed by the president of the meeting, viz. "N. M. has applied to us for liberty to preach as a local preacher in our circuit; and after due enquiry concerning his gifts, grace, and usefulness, we judge he is a proper person to be licensed for this purpose; and we accordingly authorize him to preach."

2. Before any person shall be licensed as a local preacher by a quarterly meeting, he shall bring a recommendation from the society of which he is a member.

3. A local preacher shall be eligible to the office of a deacon, after he has preached for four years from the time he received a regular license, and has obtained a testimonial from the society to which he belongs and from the stewards of the circuit, signed also by nine travelling preachers; three of whom shall be elders; three others elders or deacons; and the other three elders, deacons, or preachers.

4. Every local preacher shall have his name enrolled on a class-paper, and meet in class, if the distance of his place of residence from any class, be not too great; or, in neglect thereof, shall forfeit his license.

Quest. 2. What directions shall be given concerning the trial of local preachers, local deacons, or local elders?

Ans. If a charge be brought against a local preacher, or local deacon, or elder, the preacher who has

the oversight of the circuit, shall summon three or more local preachers of the neighbourhood, or, for want of local preachers, so many leaders or exhorters. And if they, or the majority of them, on due examination, judge that the local preacher, deacon, or elder aforesaid, has been guilty of such a crime, or has preached such false doctrines, as require his suspension from all public offices in our church, till the ensuing quarterly meeting, the preacher who has the oversight of the circuit, shall accordingly suspend him from all public offices, till the ensuing quarterly meeting.

And in such case, and in every case where a meeting assembled as above described, shall deem the said local preacher, deacon, or elder, culpable, the next quarterly meeting shall proceed upon his trial, and shall have authority to clear, censure, suspend or expel him according to their judgment. And the presiding elder, or the preacher who has the oversight of the circuit, shall, at the commencement of the trial, appoint a secretary, who shall take down regular minutes of the evidence and proceedings of the trial, which minutes, when read and approved, shall be signed by the said presiding elder or preacher, and also by the members of the said quarterly meeting, or by the majority of them.

And in case of condemnation, the local preacher, deacon, or elder, condemned, shall be allowed an appeal to the next yearly conference, provided that he signify to the said quarterly meeting his determination to appeal; in which case the said presiding elder, or preacher who has the oversight of the circuit, shall lay the minutes of the trial above mentioned, before the said yearly conference, at which the local preacher, deacon, or elder, so appealing, may appear: and the said yearly conference shall judge and finally determine from the minutes of the said trial, so laid before them.

SECTION XXI.

Of Baptism.

1. **L**ET every adult person, and the parents of every child, to be baptised, have the choice either of immersion; sprinkling, or pouring.

2. We will on no account whatever receive a present for administering baptism, or for burying of the dead.

SECTION XXII.

Of the Lord's Supper.

Quest. **A**RE there any directions to be given concerning the administration of the Lord's supper?

Answ. 1. Let those who have scruples concerning the receiving of it kneeling, be permitted to receive it either standing or sitting.

2. Let no person that is not a member of our society be admitted to the communion, without examination, and some token given by an elder or deacon.

5. No person shall be admitted to the Lord's supper among us, who is guilty of any practice for which we would exclude a member of our society.

SECTION XXIII.

Of Public Worship.

Quest. **W**HAT directions shall be given for the establishment of uniformity in public worship amongst us, on the Lord's day?

Answ. 1. Let the morning-service consist of singing, prayer, the reading of a chapter out of the Old Testament, and another out of the New, and preaching.

2. Let the afternoon-service consist of singing, prayer, the reading of one or two chapters out of the bible, and preaching.

3. Let the evening-service consist of singing prayer, and preaching.

4. But on the days of administering the Lord's supper, the two chapters in the morning-service may be omitted.

5. Let the society be met, wherever it is practicable, on the sabbath-day.

SECTION XXIV.

Of the Spirit and Truth of Singing.

Quest. HOW shall we guard against formality in singing?

Ans. 1. By choosing such hymns as are proper for the congregation?

2. By not singing too much at once; seldom more than five or six verses.

3. By suiting the tune to the words.

4. By often stopping short, and asking the people, "Now! Do you know what you said last? Did you speak no more than you felt?"

5. Do not suffer the people to sing too slow. This naturally tends to formality; and is brought in by those who have either very strong or very weak voices.

6. In every large society let them learn to sing; and let them always learn our tunes first.

7. Let the women constantly sing their parts alone. Let no man sing with them, unless he understands the notes, and sings the bass as it is composed in the tune-book.

8. Introduce no new tune till they are perfect in the old.

9. Recommend our tune-book. And if you cannot sing yourself, choose a person or two at each place to pitch the tune for you.

10. Exhort every person in the congregation to sing; not one in ten only.

11. Sing no hymns of your own composing.

12. If a preacher be present, let him alone give out the words.

13. When the singers would teach a tune to the congregation, they must sing only the tenor.

14. Let it be recommended to our people, not to attend the singing-schools which are not under our direction.

15. The preachers are desired not to encourage the singing of fuge-tunes in our congregations.

16. We do not think that fuge-tunes are sinful, or improper to be used in private companies : but we do not approve of their being used in our public congregations, because public singing is a part of divine worship, in which all the congregation ought to join:



CH A P. II.



SECTION I.

The Nature, Design, and general Rules of our United Societies.

(1) **I**N the latter end of the year 1739, eight or ten persons came to Mr. Wesley, in London, who appeared to be deeply convinced of sin, and earnestly groaning for redemption. They desired (as did two or three more the next day) that he would spend some time with them in prayer, and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come ; which they saw continually hanging over their heads. That he might have more time for this great work, he appointed a day when they might all come together, which from thence forward they did every week, namely, on *Thursday* in the evening. To these, and as many more as desired to join with them (for their number increased daily) he gave those advices from time to time which he judged most needful for

them ; and they always concluded their meeting, with prayer suited to their several necessities.

(2) This was the rise of the UNITED SOCIETY, first in *Europe*, and then in *America*. Such a society is no other than “*a company of men having the form and seeking the power of godliness, united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation.*”

(3) That it may the more easily be discerned, whether they are indeed working out their own salvation, each society is divided into smaller companies, called classes, according to their respective places of abode. There are about twelve persons in a class ; one of whom is stiled *The Leader*.——It is his duty,

I. To see each person in his class once a week at least, in order

1. To enquire how their souls prosper ;
2. To advise, reprove, comfort or exhort, as occasion may require ;
3. To receive what they are willing to give, towards the relief of the preachers, church and poor.*

II. To meet the minister and the stewards of the society once a week ; in order,

1. To inform the minister of any that are sick, or of any that walk disorderly, and will not be reproved.
2. To pay to the stewards what they have received of their several classes in the week preceding.

(4) There is one only condition previously required of those who desire admission into these societies, *a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins*. But wherever this is really fixed in the soul, it will be shewn by its fruits. It is therefore expected of all who continue therein, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

* This part refers to towns and cities, where the poor are generally numerous, and church-expences considerable.

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First, By doing no harm, by avoiding evil of every kind, especially that which is most generally practised : Such as

The taking the name of God in vain :

The profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work thereon, or by buying or selling.

Drunkenness: or drinking spirituous liquors, unless in cases of necessity :

The buying or selling of men, women, or children, with an intention to enslave them :

Fighting, quarrelling, brawling, brother going to law with brother ; returning evil for evil ; or railing for railing : the using many words in buying or selling :

The buying or selling goods that have not paid the duty :

The giving or taking things on usury, i. e. unlawful interest :

Uncharitable or unprofitable conversation : particularly speaking evil of magistrates or of ministers :

Doing to others as we would not they should do unto us :

Doing what we know is not for the glory of God :
As

The putting on of gold and costly apparel :

The taking such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus :

The singing those songs, or reading those books, which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God :

Softness, and needless self-indulgence :

Laying up treasure upon earth :

Borrowing without a probability of paying ; or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them.

(5) It is expected of all who continue in these societies, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation.

Secondly, By doing good, by being in every kind merciful after their power, as they have opportunity,

doing good of every possible sort, and as far as is possible, to all men :

To their bodies, of the ability which God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick or in prison.

To their souls, by instructing, reproof or exhorting all we have any intercourse with ; trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine, that "we are not to do good, unless *our hearts be free to it.*"

By doing good, especially to them that are of the household of faith, or groaning so to be ; employing them preferably to others, buying one of another, helping each other in business : and so much the more, because the world will love its own and them *only.*

By all possible *diligence* and *frugality*, that the gospel be not blamed.

By running with patience the race which is set before them, *denying themselves, and taking up their cross daily* : submitting to bear the reproach of Christ, to be as the filth and off-scouring of the world ; and looking that men should *say all manner of evil of them falsely for the Lord's sake.*

(6) It is expected of all who desire to continue in these societies, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

Thirdly, By attending upon all the ordinances of God : Such are,

The public worship of God :

The ministry of the word, either read or expounded ;

The supper of the Lord ;

Family and private prayer ;

Searching the scriptures and

Fasting or abstinence.

(7) These are the general rules of our societies : all which we are taught of God to observe, even in his written word, which is the only rule, and the sufficient rule both of our faith and practice. And

all these we know his Spirit writes on truly awakened hearts. If there be any among us who observe them not, who habitually break any of them, let it be known unto them who watch over that soul, as they who must give an account. We will admonish him of the error of his ways. We will bear with him for a season. But then, if he repent not, he hath no more place among us. We have delivered our own souls.

SECTION II.

Of Class-Meetings.

Quest. 1. **H**OW may the leaders of classes be rendered more useful?

Answ. 1. Let each of them be diligently examined concerning his method of meeting a class. Let this be done with all possible exactness, at least once a quarter. In order to this, take sufficient time.

2. Let each leader carefully inquire how every soul in his class prospers: Not only how each person observes the outward rules, but how he grows in the knowledge and love of God.

3. Let the leaders converse with those who have the charge of their circuits, frequently and freely.

Quest. 2. Can any thing more be done in order to make the class-meetings lively and profitable?

Answ. 1. Change improper leaders.

2. Let the leaders frequently meet each other's classes.

3. Let us observe which leaders are the most useful: And let these meet the other classes as often as possible.

4. See that all the leaders be not only men of sound judgment, but men truly devoted to God.

Quest. 3. How shall we prevent improper persons from insinuating themselves into the society?

Answ. 1. Give tickets to none until they are recommended by a leader, with whom they have met at least six months on trial.

2. Give notes to none but those who are recommended by one you know, or until they have met three or four times in a class.

3. Read the rules to them the first time they meet.

Quest. 4. How shall we be more exact in receiving and excluding members?

Ans. The official minister or preacher shall, at every quarterly meeting, read the names of those that are received and excluded.

Quest. 5. What shall we do with those members of society, who wilfully and repeatedly neglect to meet their class?

Ans. 1. Let the elder, deacon, or one of the preachers, visit them, whenever it is practicable, and explain to them the consequence if they continue to neglect, viz. Exclusion.

2. If they do not amend, Let him who has the charge of the circuit exclude them in the society; shewing that they are laid aside for a breach of our rules of discipline and not for immoral conduct.

S E C T I O N III.

Of the Band Societies.

Two, three, or four true believers, who have confidence in each other, form a Band. Only it is to be observed, that in one of these Bands all must be men, or all women; and all married, or all single.

[Rules of the Band Societies, drawn up Dec. 25, 1738.]

THE design of our meeting is to obey that command of God, *Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed:* Jam. v. 16.

To this end, we agree,

1. To meet once a week, at the least.
2. To come punctually at the hour appointed, without some extraordinary reason.
3. To begin exactly at the hour with singing or prayer.

4. To speak, each of us in order, freely and plainly the true state of our souls, with the faults we have committed in tempers, words, or actions, and the temptations we have felt since our last meeting.

5. To end every meeting with prayer, suited to the state of each person present.

6. To desire some person among us to speak *his* own state first, and then to ask the rest in order, as many and as searching questions as may be, concerning their state, sins, and temptations.

Some of the questions proposed to every one before he is admitted among us, may be to this effect :

1. Have you the forgiveness of your sins ?

2. Have you peace with God, through our LORD JESUS CHRIST ?

3. Have you the witness of God's Spirit with your spirit, that you are the child of God ?

4. Is the love of God shed abroad in your heart ?

5. Has no sin, inward or outward, dominion over you ?

6. Do you desire to be told of your faults ?

7. Do you desire to be told of *all* your faults, and that plain and home ?

8. Do you desire, that every one of us should tell you, from time to time, whatsoever is in our heart concerning you ?

9. Consider ! Do you desire we should tell you whatsoever we think, whatsoever we fear, whatsoever we hear concerning you ?

10. Do you desire, that in doing this we should come as close as possible, that we should cut to the quick, and search your heart to the bottom ?

11. Is it your desire and design to be on this and all other occasions entirely open, so as to speak without disguise, and without reserve ?

Any of the preceding questions may be asked as often as occasion requires : The four following at every meeting.

1. What known sins have you committed since our last meeting ?

2. What particular temptations have you met with?

3. How were you delivered?

4. What have you thought, said, or done, of which you doubt whether it be sin or not?

*Directions given to the Band-Societies,
December 25th, 1744.*

YOU are supposed to have the *Faith that overcometh the world*. To you therefore it is not grievous,

I. Carefully to abstain from doing evil: in particular,

1. Neither to *buy* nor *sell* any thing at all on the Lord's-day.

2. To taste no spirituous liquor, *no dram* of any kind, unless prescribed by a physician.

3. To be *at a word* both in buying and selling.

4. Not to *mention the fault* of any *behind his back*, and to stop those short that do.

5. To wear no *needless ornaments*, such as rings, ear-rings, necklaces, lace, ruffles.

6. To use no *needless self-indulgence*.

II. Zealously to maintain good works; in particular,

1. To *give alms* of such things as you possess, and that according to your ability.

2. To reprove those who sin in your sight, and that in love and meekness of wisdom.

3. To be patterns of *diligence* and *frugality*, of *self-denial*, and taking up the cross daily.

III. Constantly to attend on all the ordinances of God: in particular,

1. To be at church, and at the LORD's table, and at every public meeting of the bands, at every opportunity.

2. To use private prayer every day; and family prayer, if you are the head of a family.

4. To speak, each of us in order, freely and plainly the true state of our souls, with the faults we have committed in tempers, words, or actions, and the temptations we have felt since our last meeting.

5. To end every meeting with prayer, suited to the state of each person present.

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1. To be at church, and at the LORD's table, and at every public meeting of the bands, at every opportunity.

2. To use private prayer every day; and family prayer, if you are the head of a family.

3. Frequently to read the scriptures, and meditate thereon. And,

4. To observe, as days of fasting or abstinence, all *Fridays* in the year.

SECTION IV.

Of the Privileges granted to serious Persons who are not of our Society.

Quest. 1. **H**OW often shall we permit strangers to be present at the meeting of the society?

Ans. At every other meeting of the society in every place, let no stranger be admitted. At other times they may; but the same persons not above twice or thrice.

Quest. 2. How often shall we permit strangers to be present at our love-feasts?

Ans. Let them be admitted with the utmost caution; and the same person on no account above twice or thrice, unless he become a member.

SECTION V.

Of Marriage.

Quest. **D**O we observe any evil which has prevailed among our societies with respect to marriage.

Ans. Many of our members have married with *unawakened* persons. This has produced bad effects; they have been either hindered for life, or have turned back to perdition.

Quest. 2. What can be done to discourage this?

Ans. 1. Let every preacher publicly enforce the apostle's caution, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers."

2. Let him declare, whoever does this, will be put back on trial six months.

3. When any such is put back on trial, let a suitable exhortation be subjoined.

4. Let all be exhorted to take no step in so weighty a matter, without advising with the most serious of their brethren

Quest. 3. Ought any woman to marry without the consent of her parents?

Answ. In general she ought not. Yet there may be exceptions. For if, 1. A woman believe it to be her duty to marry: If, 2. Her parents absolutely refuse to let her marry any christian: Then she may, nay, ought to marry without their consent. Yet even then a Methodist preacher ought not to be married to her.

We do not prohibit our people from marrying persons who are not of our society, provided, such persons have the form, and are seeking the power of godliness; but we are determined to discourage their marrying persons who do not come up to this description. And even in a doubtful case, the member shall be put back on trial.

SECTION VI.

Of Dress.

Quest. **S**HOULD we insist on the rules concerning dress?

Answ. By all means. This is no time to give any encouragement to superfluity of apparel. Therefore give no tickets to any, till they have left off superfluous ornaments. In order to this, 1. Let every one who has the charge of a circuit, read the thoughts upon dress, at least once a year in every large society. 2. In visiting the classes, be very mild, but very strict. 3. Allow of no exempt case: Better one suffer than many. 4. Give no tickets to any that wear high heads, enormous bonnets, ruffles, or rings.

SECTION VII.

Of bringing to Trial, finding Guilty, and reproof, suspending, or excluding disorderly Persons from Society and Church Privileges.

Quest. **H**OW shall an accused member be brought to trial?

Answ. 1. Before the society of which he is a member, or a select number of them, in the presence of a bishop, elder, deacon, or preacher, in the following manner; Let the accused and accuser be brought face to face: but if this cannot be done, let the next best evidence be procured. If the accused person be found guilty by the decision of a majority of the members before whom he is brought to trial, and the crime be such as is expressly forbidden by the word of God, sufficient to exclude a person from the kingdom of grace and glory, let the minister or preacher who has the charge of the circuit, expel him. If the accused person evade a trial by absenting himself after sufficient notice given him, and the circumstances of the accusation be strong and presumptive, let him be esteemed as guilty, and be accordingly excluded. Witnesses from without, shall not be rejected.

2. But in cases of neglect of duties of any kind, imprudent conduct, indulging sinful tempers or words, or disobedience to the order and discipline of the church,—First, let private reproof be given by a preacher or leader; and if there be an acknowledgment of the fault and proper humiliation, the person may remain on trial. On a second offence, the preacher or leader may take one or two faithful friends. On a third offence, let the case be brought before the society or a select number; and if there be no sign of real humiliation, the offender must be cut off.

3. If a member of our church shall be clearly convicted of endeavouring to sow dissensions in any of our societies, by inveighing against either our doctrines or discipline, such person so offending shall be first reprov'd by the senior minister or preacher of his circuit, and, if he afterwards persist in such pernicious practices, he shall be expelled the society.

4. Nevertheless, if in any of the abovementioned cases the minister or preacher differ in judgment from the majority of the society, or the select number, concerning the innocence or guilt of the accused person, the trial, in such case, may be referred by the minister or preacher, to the ensuing quarterly meeting.

5. If there be a murmur or complaint from any excluded person in any of the abovementioned instances, that justice has not been done, he shall be allowed an appeal to the next quarterly meeting; and the majority of the ministers, travelling and local preachers, exhorters, stewards and leaders present, shall finally determine the case.

After such forms of trial and expulsion, such persons shall have no privileges of society or of sacraments in our church, without contrition, confession, and proper trial.

SECTION VIII.

Of the Sale and Use of Spirituous Liquors.

Quest. **W**HAT directions shall be given concerning the sale and use of spirituous liquors?

Ans. If any member of our society retail or give spirituous liquors, and any thing disorderly be transacted under his roof on this account, the preacher who has the oversight of the circuit shall proceed against him as in the case of other immoralities; and the person accused shall be cleared, censured, suspended or excluded according to his conduct, as on other charges of immorality.

CHAP. III.

SECTION I.

Of Christian Perfection.

LET us strongly and explicitly exhort all believers to go on to perfection. That we may all speak the same thing, we ask once for all, shall we defend this perfection, or give it up? We all agree to defend it, meaning thereby (as we did from the beginning) salvation from all sin, properly so called, by the love of God and man filling our heart. Some say "This cannot be attained till we have been refined by the fire of purgatory." Others, "Nay it will be attained as soon as the soul and the body part." But others say, "It may be attained before we die: A moment after is too late." Is it so, or not? We are all agreed, we may be saved from all sin before death, i. e. from all sinful tempers and desires. The substance then is settled. But as to the circumstances, is the change gradual or instantaneous? It is both the one and the other. "But should we in preaching insist both on one and the other?" Certainly we should insist on the gradual change; and that earnestly and continually. And are there not reasons why we should insist on the instantaneous change? If there be such a blessed change before death, should we not encourage all believers to expect it? And the rather, because constant experience shews, the more earnestly they expect this, the more swiftly and steadily does the gradual work of God go on in their souls; the more careful are they to grow in grace; the more zealous of good works, and the more punctual in their attendance on all the ordinances of God: (whereas just the contrary effects are observed, whenever this expectation ceases.) They are saved by hope, by

this hope of a total change, with a gradually increasing salvation. Destroy this hope, and that salvation stands still, or rather decreases daily. Therefore, whoever would advance the gradual change in believers, should strongly insist on the instantaneous.

SECTION II.

Against Antinomianism.

Quest. 1. **W**HAT can be done to guard against Antinomianism?

Ans. 1. Let all the preachers carefully read over Mr. Wesley's and Mr. Fletcher's tracts. 2. Let them frequently and explicitly preach the truth, but not in a controversial way. And let them take care to do it in love and gentleness: Not in bitterness, returning railing for railing. 2. Answer all the objections of our people as occasion offers: But take care to do it in a christian temper.

Quest. 2. Wherein lies our danger of it?

Ans. 1. With regard to man's *faithfulness*, our Lord himself hath taught us to use the expression: therefore we ought never to be ashamed of it. We ought steadily to assert upon his authority, that if a man is not faithful in the unrighteous mammon, God will not give him the true riches.

2. With regard to working for life, which our Lord expressly commands us to do. Labour, (*ἐργαζέσθε*) literally, *work for the meat that endureth to everlasting life*. And in fact every believer till he comes to glory, works for, as well as from life.

3. We have received it as a maxim, that "A man is to do nothing in order to justification:" Nothing can be more false. Whoever desires to find favour with God, should cease from evil, and learn to do well. So God himself teacheth by the prophet Isaiah. Whoever repents, should do works meet for repent-

ance? And if this is not in order to find favour, what does he do them for?

Once more review the whole affair.

1. Who of us is *now* accepted of God;

He that *now* believes in Christ with a loving, obedient heart.

2. But who among those that never heard of Christ?

He that according to the light he has, feareth God and worketh righteousness.

3. Is this the same with, He that is sincere?

Nearly, if not quite.

4. Is not this salvation by works?

Not by the merit of works, but by works as a condition.

5. The grand objection to one of the preceding propositions, is drawn from matter of fact. God does in fact justify those who by their own confession neither feared God nor wrought righteousness. Is this any exception to the general rule?

It is a doubt whether God makes any exception at all. But how are we sure that the person in question never did fear God, and work righteousness?

His own thinking so is no proof. For we know how all that are convinced of sin, undervalue themselves in every respect.

6. Does not talking without proper caution of a justified or sanctified state, tend to mislead men? Almost naturally leading them to trust in what was done in one moment? Whereas we are every moment pleasing or displeasing God, according to our works; according to the whole of our present inward tempers, and outward behaviour.

SECTION III.

Scripture Doctrine of Predestination, Election, and Reprobation.

1. **T**HE scripture saith, * God hath chosen us in Christ, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love. And St. Peter calls the saints, † elect according to the fore-knowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the spirit unto obedience. And St. Paul saith unto them, ‡ God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth; whereunto he hath called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. From all these places of scripture it is plain, that God hath chosen some to life and glory before or from the foundation of the world. And the wisdom of all christians is, to labour that their judgments may be informed herein, according to the scripture. And to that end, let us consider the manner of God's speaking to the sons of men.

3. God saith to Abraham, Rom. iv. 17. *As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations, before him whom he believed, even God who quickeneth the dead, and calleth things that are not as though they were.* Observe, God speaks then, at that present time, to Abraham, saying, *I have made thee a father of many nations*, notwithstanding Abraham was not at that time the father of one child, but Ishmael. How then must we understand, *I have made thee a father of many nations*?

4. The apostle tells us plainly, it was so, *Before God, who calleth things that are not as though they were.* And so he calleth Abraham, the father of many nations, though he was not as yet the father even of Isaac, in whom his seed was to be called.

* Ephes. i. 4.

† 1 Pet. i. 2.

‡ 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14.

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* Ephes. i. 4.

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‡ 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14.

5. God useth the same manner of speaking when he calleth Christ, **The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*; although indeed he was not slain for some thousand years after. Hence therefore we may easily understand what he speaketh of *electing us from the foundation of the world*.

6. God calleth Abraham, *a father of many nations*, though not so at that time. He calleth Christ, *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*, though not slain till he was a man in the flesh. Even so he calleth men *Elected from the foundation of the world*, though not elected till they were men in the flesh. Yet it is also before God, who knowing all things from eternity, *calleth things that are not as though they were*.

7. By all which it is clear, that as Christ was called *The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*; and yet not slain till some thousand years after, till the day of his death, so also men are called *elect from the foundation of the world*, and yet not elected perhaps till some thousand years after, till the day of their conversion to God.

8. And indeed this is plain, without going farther, from those very words of St. Peter, *Elect according to the fore-knowledge of God, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience*. For,

If the Elect are chosen through sanctification of the Spirit, then they were not chosen before they were sanctified by the Spirit. But they were not sanctified by the Spirit before they had a being. It is plain then neither were they chosen from the foundation of the world. But God calleth *things that are not as though they were*.

9. This is also plain from those words of St. Paul, *God, hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth*. Now,

If the saints are chosen to salvation, through believing of the truth, and were called to believe that truth by hearing of the gospel, then they were not chosen before they believed the truth, and before they heard the gospel, whereby they were called to believe. But they were chosen through belief of the truth, and called to believe it by the gospel. Therefore they were not chosen before they believed; much less before they had a being, any more than Christ was slain before he had a being. So plain is it, that they were not elected, till they believed; although God *calleth things that are not as though they were.*

10. Again, how plain is it were St. Paul saith, that they whom * God *did predestinate, according to the counsel of his own will, to be to the praise of his own glory,* were such as did *first trust in Christ?* And in the very next verse he saith, that they *trusted in Christ after they heard the word of truth,* not before. But they did not hear the word before they were born. Therefore it is plain, the act of electing is *in time,* though known of God before; who, according to his knowledge, often speaketh of the things *which are not as though they were.* And thus is the great stumbling-block about election taken away, that men may *make their calling and election sure.*

11. The scripture tells us as plainly what predestination is; it is God's fore-appointing obedient believers to salvation, not without, but *according to his fore-knowledge of all their works from the foundation of the world.* And so likewise he predestinates or fore-appoints all disobedient unbelievers to damnation, not without, but *according to his fore-knowledge of all their works from the foundation of the world.*

12. We may consider this a little farther. God, from the foundation of the world, fore-knew all men's believing or not believing. And according to this his fore-knowledge, he chose or elected all obedient believers, as such, to salvation, and refused or

* Ephes. i. 11. 12.

reprobated all disobedient unbelievers, as such, to damnation. Thus the scriptures teach us to consider *election* and *reprobation*, according to the foreknowledge of God from the foundation of the world.

13. But here some may object, that I hold our faith and obedience to be the cause of God's electing us to glory.

I answer, I do hold, that faith in Christ producing obedience to him is *a cause without which* God elected none to glory : for we never read of God's electing to glory, any who lived and died a disobedient unbeliever. But I do not hold, that it is the cause *for which* he elects any : the contrary of this is easily shewn thus :

Suppose my obedience is a cause of my election to salvation, What is the cause of my obedience?

Answer. My love to Christ.

But what is the cause of my love to Christ?

Answer. My faith in Christ.

But what is the cause of my faith in Christ?

Answer. The preaching of the gospel of Christ.

But what is the cause of the preaching of the gospel to us?

Answer. Christ dying for us.

But what is the cause of Christ dying for us?

Answer. God's great love of pity wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins.

14. Thus all men may see that I do not hold, God chose any man to life and salvation for any good which he had done, or for any which was in him, before he put it there. And this I shall now shew more at large from the oracles of God.

1. God's great love of pity wherewith he loved the sons of men, even while they were dead in trespasses and sins, was the cause of his sending his Son to die for them ; as appears from the following scriptures ; * *God so loved the world, that he gave*

* John iii. 16.

his only begotten Son, to the end that all who believe in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. For * when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. And God commendeth his love to us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

2. Christ's dying for our sins is the cause of the gospel's being preached to us, as appears from those scriptures, † Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations. ‡ Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

3. The gospel's being preached to sinners is the cause of their believing, as appears from those scriptures, || How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

4. Men's believing is the cause of their justification, as appears from these scriptures, ¶ By him all that believe are justified from all things. ** He is the justifier of all that believe in Jesus. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law. †† Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and rose again for our justification.

5. Our knowing ourselves justified by faith is the cause of our love to Christ, as appears from these scriptures, ‡‡ Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ||| We love him because he first loved us.

* Rom. v. 6, &c.

† Matt. xxviii. 18.

‡ Mark xvi. 15.

|| Rom. x. 15, &c.

¶ Acts. xiii. 39.

** Rom. iii. 26, &c.

†† Rom. iv. 3, 23, &c.

‡‡ I John iv. 10.

||| : John iv. 19.

6. Our love to Christ is the cause of our obeying him, as appears from those scriptures, * *If ye love me, keep my commandments. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me. And, If any man love me, he will keep my words.* † *For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments.*

7. Our obeying Christ is the cause of his giving us eternal life, as appears from those scriptures, ‡ *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven.* || *Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.* And ¶ *Christ being made perfect through sufferings, he became the author of eternal salvation to all that obey him.*

15. This may be more briefly expressed thus :—

1. God's love was the cause of his sending his Son to die for sinners.

2. Christ's dying for sinners, is the cause of the gospel's being preached.

3. The preaching of the gospel is the cause, or means, of our believing.

4. Our believing is the cause, or condition, of our justification.

5. The knowing ourselves justified through his blood, is the cause of our love to Christ.

6. Our love to Christ is the cause of our obedience to him.

7. Our obedience to Christ is the cause of his becoming the author of eternal salvation to us.

16. These following things therefore ought well to be considered by all that fear God.

1. There was a necessity of God's love in sending his Son to die for us, without which he had not come to die.

* John xiv. 15, 21, &c. † 1 John v. 3. ‡ Matt. vii. 21.
|| Rev. xxii. 14. ¶ Heb. v. 9.

2. There was a necessity of Christ's love in dying for us, without which the gospel could not have been preached.

3. There was a necessity of the gospel's being preached, without which there could have been no believing.

4. There is a necessity of our believing the gospel, without which we cannot be justified.

5. There is a necessity of our being justified by faith in the blood of Christ, without which we cannot come to know that he *loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.*

6. There is a necessity of knowing his love, who first loved us, without which we cannot love him again.

7. There is a necessity of our loving him, without which we cannot keep his commandments.

8. There is a necessity of our keeping his commandments, without which we cannot enter into eternal life.

By all which we see, that there is as great a necessity of our keeping the commandments of God, as there was of God's sending his Son into the world, or of Christ's dying for our sins.

17. But for whose sins did Christ die? Did he die for *all* men, or but for *some*?

To this also I shall answer by the scriptures, shewing, 1. The testimony of all the prophets. 2. Of the angel of God. 3. Of Christ himself. And, 4. Of his apostles.

*First, the prophet Isaiah saith thus, * Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet did we esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep, have gone astray: we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the in-*

* Isaiah liii. 4, 5, 6,

iniquities of us all. Thus Isaiah sheweth plainly, that the iniquities of all those who went astray, were laid upon Christ. And to him the testimony of all the other prophets agreeth : * *To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.*—The same saith that great prophet, John the Baptist, who † came to bear witness of the light, that all men through it might believe.

And again, ‡ *Behold, saith he, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.* Thus have all the prophets, with one consent, testified that God laid upon Christ the iniquities of ‖ that were gone astray : that he is the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world ; that all men through him may believe : and that through his name whosoever believeth in him, shall receive remission of sins.

Secondly, The angel of God testified the same thing, saying, ‖ *Fear not : for I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people,* which was, that there was born unto them a Saviour, even Christ the Lord. By this also it appears, that Christ died for all men. For else it could not have been glad tidings of great joy to all people ; but rather sad tidings to all those for whom he died not.

Thirdly, We come now to the words of Christ himself, who knew his own business better than any man else ; and therefore if his testimony agree with these, we must needs be convinced that they are true. Now he speaks thus ; ¶ *As Moses lifted up the serpent in the Wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.

* Acts x. 43. † John i. 7. ‡ Ibid. ver. 29. ¶ Luke ii. 10.

¶ John iii. 14, &c.

Thus we see the words of Christ agree with the words of the prophets ; therefore it must needs be owned that Christ died for all.

Fourthly, And now we will hear what the apostles say concerning this thing. * *The love of Christ*, saith the Apostle Paul, *constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead : and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them, and rose again.* And to Timothy he saith, † *There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.* Again, he saith to Titus, ‡ *The grace of God, which bringeth salvation to all men, hath appeared.* And yet again to the Hebrews, || *That he, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man.* And to this agreeth St. John, witnessing, ¶ *He is the propitiation for our sins ; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.* And again, speaking of himself and the rest of the apostles, he saith ** *We have seen and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.* Thus we have the testimony of all the prophets, of the angel of God, of Christ himself, and of his holy apostles, all agreeing together in one to prove, that Christ died for all mankind.

18. What then can they, who deny this, say ? Why they commonly say, *All men*, in these scriptures, does not mean *all men*, but only *the elect* ; that *every man* here does not mean *every man*, but only every one of the elect ; that *the world* does not mean *the whole world*, but only the world of believers ; and that the *whole world*, in St. John's words, does not mean *the whole world*, but only the whole world of the elect.

19. To this shameless, senseless evasion, I answer thus :

* 2 Cor. v. 14, &c.

|| Heb. ii. 9.

† 1 Tim. ii. 5. 6.

¶ 1 John ii. 2.

‡ Tit. ii. 11.

** 1 John iv. 14.

If the scripture no where speaks of a world of believers or elect, then we have no ground, reason, pretence, or excuse for saying, Christ died only for a world of believers or elect. But the scripture no where speaks of such a world. Therefore we have no ground or pretence for speaking thus.

Nay, the scripture is so far from calling believers or elected persons, *the world*, that they are everywhere in scripture plainly and expressly distinguished from the world. * "If ye were of the world, saith Christ, the world would love its own; but because I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

20. But let the scripture itself speak, what world Christ died for. † "When we were yet without strength, Christ died for the ungodly. While we were yet sinners Christ died for us. When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son." From all which we may clearly see, that Christ died for the world of the ungodly, for the world of sinners, for the world of his enemies, the just one for the world of the unjust. But the elect, as elect, are not unjust. Therefore he died not for the elect, as elect; but even for that world St. John speaks of, when he says, "The whole world lieth in wickedness."

21. If it be said, "The elect were sinners once as well as others;" I answer, true; but not as they are elect in Christ, but as they were out of Christ, without hope and without God in the world. Therefore to say that Christ died for the elect, as elect, is absolute nonsense and confusion.

22. To put this matter out of doubt, I would commend these following considerations to all sober-minded men.

1. The scripture saith, "Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost."

But the elect, as elect, were not lost.

* John xv. 19.

† Rom. v. 6—10.

Therefore Christ died not for the elect, s, or because they were, elect; for that had been to seek and save what was found and saved before.

2. The scripture saith, Christ died for the unjust.

But the elect, as such, are not unjust.

Therefore, Christ died not for the elect, as elect; for that had been to justify them who were just before.

3. The scripture saith, "He came to preach deliverance to the captives."

But the elect, as elect, are not captives, for Christ hath set them free.

Therefore he died not for the elect, as elect; for that had been to set them at liberty who were at liberty before.

4. The scripture saith, "He quickened them who were dead in trespasses and sins, such as were without Christ, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise, without hope and without God in the world."

But the elect, as such, are not dead in trespasses and sins, but alive unto God. Neither are they without Christ, for they are chosen in him; nor are they aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise. But they are fellow-citizens with the saints, and the household of God.

Therefore Christ died not for the elect, as or because they were elect. For that had been to quicken them that were alive before, and to bring them into covenant, who were in covenant before. And thus, by these men's account, our Lord lost his labour of love, and accomplished A SOLEMN NOTHING.

23. Thus having shewn the grievous folly of those who say, that Christ died for none but the elect, I shall now prove by undeniable reasons, that he died for all mankind.

Reason 1. Because all the prophets, the angel of God, Christ himself, and his holy apostles with one consent, affirm it.

Reason 2. Because there is not one scripture from the beginning of Genesis to the end of the Revelation, that denies it, either negatively, by saying, that he did not die for all : or affirmatively, by saying that he died but for some.

Reason 3. Because he himself commanded, that the gospel should be preached to every creature.

Reason 4. Because he calleth all men, every where to repent.

Reason 5. Because those who perish are damned for not believing in the name of the only begotten Son of God. Therefore, he must have died for them. Else they would be damned for not believing a lie.

Reason 6. Because they which are damned might have been saved. For thus saith the word of God, *
“They received not the love of the truth that they might be saved. Therefore, God shall send them strong delusions, to believe a lie, that they all may be damned.”

Reason 7. Because some deny the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. But they could not deny the Lord that bought them, if he had not bought them at all.

24. I shall now briefly shew the dreadful absurdities that follow from saying Christ died only for the elect.

1. If Christ died not for all, then unbelief is no sin in them that finally perish ; seeing there is not any thing for those men to believe unto salvation, for whom Christ died not.

2. If Christ died not for all, then it would be a sin in the greatest part of mankind to believe he died for them ; seeing it would be to believe a lie.

3. If Christ died not for those that are damned, then they are not damned for unbelief. Otherwise, you say, that they are damned for not believing a lie.

4. If Christ died not for all, then those who obey Christ by going and preaching the gospel to every

* 2 Thess. ii. 10.

creature, as glad tidings of grace and peace, of great joy to all people, do sin thereby, in that they go to most people with a lie in their mouth.

5. If Christ died not for all men, then God is not in earnest, in calling all men every where to repent : for what good would repentance do those, for whom Christ died not ?

6. If Christ died not for all, then why does he say he is not willing any should perish ? Surely he is willing, yea, resolved that most men should perish ; else he would have died for them also.

7. How shall God judge the world by the man Christ Jesus, if Christ did not die for the world ? Or how shall he judge them according to the gospel, when there was never any gospel or mercy for them ?

25. But, say some, " If Christ died for all, why are not all saved ? "

I answer, Because they believe not in the name of the only begotten Son of God. Because God called, and they refused to answer ; he stretched out his hand, and they regarded not ; he counselled them, but they would none of his counsels ; he reproved them, but they set at nought all his reproofs ; they followed after lying vanities, and forsook their own mercies ; they denied the Lord that bought them, and so brought upon themselves swift destruction ; and because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved therefore (if you would know wherefore) God gave them up to believe a lie, and to be damned. How often, saith our Lord, would I have gathered you together, and ye would not ? Ye would not. Here is the plain reason, why all men are not saved. For God promiseth no man salvation, whether he will or no ; but leaveth them to everlasting destruction, who will not believe and obey the gospel.

26. " O, then you are an Arminian ! You are a free-willer. You hold free-will in man ! "

I hold nothing but what the scripture saith ; and

that you should give me leave to hold. I do not hold that any man has any will or power of himself to do any thing that is good ; but by the grace of God we may do all things. I have already shewn, he hath given Christ for all men. And he who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things? And what man knoweth not, that if he make use of all the will and power God hath given him, God will double his talent and give him more? If any, therefore, desire to have more, let him faithfully improve what he has. Likewise what man is he, who doth not know that he is not condemned for not doing what he could not do, but for leaving undone what he could have done if he would. Let any man deny it if he can.

27. "What then, may all men be saved if they will?"

Before I answer this question directly, I shall shew that those who ask it are themselves compelled to grant as much freedom of will, as we desire to plead for.

For, 1. The Assembly of Divines, in their Confession of Faith, c. 9. do expressly say, "God hath endowed the will of man with that natural liberty that it is neither forced, nor by any absolute necessity determined to do good or evil." 2. Mr. Baxter, in the preface of his call to the unconverted, says, "That Calvin, as well as Arminius, held free-will, and that no man of brains denieth, that man hath a will that is naturally free; it is free from violence, it is a self-determining principle." Sure, here is as much said for free-will, as any man need to say, and perhaps more. For,

The difference between us, is this. They say, "Man hath a will which is naturally free." We say, "Man hath this freedom of will, not naturally, but by grace."

We believe, that in the moment Adam fell, he had

no freedom of will left; but that God, when of his own free grace he gave the promise of a Saviour to him and his posterity, graciously restored to mankind a liberty and power to accept of proffered salvation. And in all this, man's boasting is excluded; the whole of that which is good in him, even from the first moment of his fall, being of grace and not of nature. And now we come directly to the question, Whether all men may be saved if they will?

28. To those who have considered what has been premised; I answer, 1. What should hinder them, if they be willing? For, 2. God is not willing that any should perish; yea, 3. He is willing that all men should be saved. And Christ is willing; for he "came not to judge the world, but to save the world." And how did he weep over Jerusalem? How often would he have gathered them together, even as an hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but they would not. And now what hinders men's salvation but that same, *They would not.*

29. They would not; they will not come at Christ's call, and hearken to his reproof, and wait for his counsels, and receive power from on high to live to him who died for them, walking in all his commandments and ordinances blameless, and following him whithersoever he goeth. This way is so narrow that few care to walk therein; and therefore they are not saved, even because *they reject the counsel of God against themselves.* They choose death; therefore they perish everlastingly.

SECTION IV.

SERIOUS THOUGHTS

ON THE

*Infallible, unconditional Perseverance of
all that have once experienced Faith in
Christ.*

1. **M**ANY large volumes have already been published on this important subject. But the very length of them makes them hard to be understood, or even purchased by common readers. A short plain treatise on this head, is what serious men have long desired, and what is here offered to those whom God has endowed with love and meekness of wisdom.

2. By the *Saints* I understand, those who are holy or righteous in the judgment of God himself: those who are endowed with the faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conscience: those who are grafted into the good olive-tree, the spiritual, invisible church: those who are branches of the true vine, of whom Christ says, "I am the vine, ye are the branches:" those who so effectually know Christ, as by that knowledge to have escaped the pollutions of the world: those who see the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and who have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, of the witness and the fruits of the Spirit: those who live by faith in the Son of God: those who are sanctified by the blood of the covenant: those to whom all, or any of these characters belong, I mean by the term *Saints*.

3. Can any of these fall away? By *falling away* we mean, not barely falling into sin. This, it is granted

they may. But can they fall *totally*? Can any of these so fall from God, as to perish everlastingly?

4. I am sensible either side of this question is attended with great difficulties; such as reason alone could never remove. Therefore to the law and to the testimony. Let the living oracles decide: and if they speak for us, we neither seek nor want any further witness.

5. On this authority, I believe a saint may fall away: that one who is holy or righteous in the judgment of God himself, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

I. For thus saith the Lord: * "When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity; in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die."

That this is to be understood of eternal death appears from the 26th verse:

"When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; (here is temporal death) for his iniquity that he hath done he shall die:" (here is death eternal.)

It appears further from the whole scope of the chapter, which is to prove, † "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

If you say, "the soul here means the body," I answer, that will die whether you sin or no.

6. Again, thus saith the Lord, ‡ "When I shall say to the righteous that he shall surely live, if he trust to his own righteousness (yea, or to that promise as absolute and unconditional) and committeth iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered, but for the iniquity that he hath committed shall he die."

Again, § "When the righteous turneth from his righteousness and committeth iniquity, he shall even die thereby."

* Ezek. xviii. 24.

† c. xviii. v. 4.

‡ c. xxxiii. v. 13.

§ v. 18.

Therefore one who is holy and righteous in the judgment of God himself, may yet so fall as to perish everlastingly.

7. "But how is this consistent with what God declareth elsewhere?" * "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments—I will visit their offences with the rod, and their sin with scourges. Nevertheless, my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my truth to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips: I have sworn once by my holiness that I will not fail David."

I answer, there is no manner of inconsistency between one declaration and the other. The prophet declares the judgment of God, against every righteous man who falls from his righteousness. The Psalmist declares, † "The old loving kindnesses which God sware unto David in his truth. I have found, *saith he*, David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him. My hand shall hold him fast, and my arm shall strengthen him.—His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven." It follows, ‡ "But if his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments—nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my truth to fail. My covenant will I not break. I will not fail David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me."

May not every man see, that the covenant here spoken of, relates wholly to David and his seed or children? Where then is the inconsistency between the most absolute promise made to a particular family, and that solemn account which God has here given of his way of dealing with mankind?

Besides, the very covenant mentioned in these words is not absolute, but conditional. The condition

* Psalm lxxxix. 30---34. † v. 20, 21, 29. ‡ c. lxxxix. v. 30 &c.

of repentance in case of forsaking God's law was implied, though not expressed. And so strongly implied, that this condition failing not being performed, God did also *fail David*. He did *alter the thing that had gone out of his lips*, and yet without any impeachment of his truth. He * "abhorred and forsook his anointed," the seed of David, whose throne, if they had repented, should have been *as the days of heaven*. He did † "break the covenant of his servant, and cast his crown to the ground." So vainly are these words of the Psalmist brought to contradict the plain, full testimony of the Prophet.

8. Nor is there any contradiction between this testimony of God, by Ezekiel, and those words which he spake by Jeremiah: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." For do these words assert, that no righteous man ever did turn from his righteousness? No such thing. They do not touch the question, but simply declare God's love to the Jewish church. To see this in the clearest light, you need only read over the whole sentence. † "At the same time, saith the Lord, I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people. Thus saith the Lord, the people which were left of the sword, found grace in the wilderness, even Israel, when I caused him to rest." "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saith the prophet speaking in the person of Israel, saying, I have loved thee with an everlasting love therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee. Again, I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel."

Suffer me here to observe once for all, a fallacy which is constantly used by almost all writers on this point. They perpetually beg the question by applying to particular persons, assertions, or prophecies, which relate only to the church in general: and

* Psalm lxxxix. 38. † v. 44. ‡ Jer. xxxi. 1, 2, 3, 4.

some of them only to the Jewish church and nation, as distinguished from all other people.

If you say, "But it was particularly revealed to me, that God hath loved me with an everlasting love:" I answer, Suppose it was, (which might bear a dispute) it proves no more, at most, than that *you* in particular shall persevere: but does not affect the general question, Whether others shall or shall not?

II. 9. Secondly, One who is endued with the faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conscience, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

For thus saith the inspired apostle, * "War a good warfare, holding faith and a good conscience, which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck."

Observe, 1. These men (such as Hymeneus and Alexander) had once the faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conscience. This they once had, or they could not have *put it away*.

Observe, 2. They *made shipwreck* of the faith, which necessarily implies the total and final loss of it. For a vessel once wrecked can never be recovered. It is totally and finally lost.

And the apostle himself in his second epistle to Timothy, mentions one of these two as irrevocably lost.

† "Alexander, says he, did me much evil: The Lord shall reward him according to his works." Therefore, one who is endued with the faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conscience, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

10. "But how can this be reconciled with these words of our Lord, *He that believeth shall be saved?*"

Do you think these words mean *he that believes at this moment, shall certainly and inevitably be saved?*

* 1 Tim. i. 18, 19.

† 2 Tim. iv. 14.

If this interpretation be good, then by all the rules of speech, the other part of the sentence must mean, *he that does not believe at this moment, shall certainly and inevitably be damned.*

Therefore that interpretation cannot be good. The plain meaning then of the whole sentence is, *He that believeth, if he continue in the faith, shall be saved; he that believeth not, if he continue in unbelief, shall be damned.*

11. 'But does not Christ say elsewhere,' * "He that believeth hath everlasting life? And † He that believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life?"

I answer, 1. The love of God is everlasting life. It is, in substance, the life of heaven. Now every one that believes, loves God, and therefore *hath everlasting life.*

2. Every one that believes is therefore *passed from death, spiritual death, unto life*; and,

3. *Shall not come into condemnation*, if he endureth in the faith unto the end: according to our Lord's own word, "He that endureth to the end shall be saved:" and † "Verily I say unto you, if a man keep my saying, he shall never see death."

III. 12. Thirdly, Those who are grafted into the good olive-tree, the spiritual, invisible church, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

For thus saith the apostle: || "Some of the branches are broken off, and thou art grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive-tree."

"Be not high-minded, but fear: if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he spare not thee."

* John ii. 36.

† c. vi. 24.

† c. viii. 51.

|| Rom. xi. 17, 20, 21, 22.

“Behold the goodness and severity of God? On them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise thou shalt be cut off.

We may observe here, 1. The persons spoken to were actually grafted into the olive-tree.

2. This olive-tree is not barely the outward, visible church, but the invisible, consisting of holy believers. So the text: * “if the first fruit be holy, the lump is holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches.” And, “Because of unbelief, they were broken off, and thou standest by faith.”

3. These holy believers were still liable to be cut off from the visible church, into which they were then grafted.

4. Here is not the least intimation of those who were so cut off, being ever grafted in again.

Therefore those who are grafted into the good olive-tree, the spiritual, invisible church, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

13. “But how does this agree with the 29th verse, the gifts and calling of God are without repentance?”

The preceding verse shews; *as touching the election* (the unconditional election of the Jewish nation) “they are beloved for the fathers’ sake:” for the sake of their forefathers. It follows (in proof of this, that “they are beloved for the fathers’ sake;” that God has still blessings in store for the Jewish nation) for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance: for God doth not repent of any blessings he hath given to them, or any privileges he hath called them to. The words here referred to were originally spoken with a peculiar regard to these national blessings. † “God is not a man, that he should lie, neither the son of man, that he should repent.”

* Rom. xi. 16.

† Numb. xxxiii. 19.

14. "But do you not hereby make God changeable?" Whereas * "with him there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." By no means: God is unchangeably holy; therefore he always "loveth righteousness, and hateth iniquity. He is unchangeably good; therefore he pardoneth all that *repent and believe the gospel*. And he is unchangeably just: therefore he *rewardeth every man according to his works*. But all this hinders not his resisting when they are proud, those to whom he gave grace when they were humble. Nay, his unchangeableness itself requires, that if they grow high-minded, God should cut them off: that there should be a proportionable change in all the divine dispensations towards them.

15. "But how then is God *faithful*?" I answer, in fulfilling every promise which he hath made, to all to whom it is made, all who fulfil the condition of that promise. More particularly, 1st. † "God is faithful *in that* he will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able *to bear*." 2d. ‡ "The Lord is faithful to establish and keep you from evil," (if you put your trust in him) from all the evil which you might otherwise suffer, through *unreasonable and wicked men*. 3d. || "Quench not the Spirit; hold fast that which is good; abstain from all appearance of evil: *and your whole spirit soul and body shall be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*. Faithful is he that calleth you, who will also do it." 4th. Be not disobedient unto the heavenly calling, and ¶ "God is faithful by whom ye were called, to confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless, in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." Yet notwithstanding all this, unless you fulfil the condition, you cannot attain the promise.

"Nay, but, are not *all the promises, yea and amen*?" They are. They are *firm as the pillars of heaven*.

* James i. 17.

† 1 Cor. x. 13.

‡ 2 Thess. iii. 2, 3.

|| 2 Thess. v. 19. &c.

¶ 1 Cor. i. 8, 9.

Perform the condition ; and the promise is sure. Believe and thou shalt be saved.

“But many promises are absolute and unconditional.” In many, the condition is not expressed. But this does not prove, there is none implied. No promises can be expressed in a more absolute form, than those above cited from the 89th Psalm. And yet we have seen, a condition was implied even there, though none was expressed.

16. “But there is no condition either expressed or implied, in those words of St. Paul,* “I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor height, nor depth, nor any creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Suppose there is not, (which will bear a dispute) yet what will this prove? Just thus much, that the apostle was at that time fully persuaded of his own perseverance. And I doubt not, but many believers at this day, have the very same persuasion, termed in scripture, the full assurance of hope. But this does not prove, that every believer shall persevere, any more than that every believer is thus fully persuaded of his perseverance.

IV. 17. Fourthly, Those who are branches of the true vine, of whom Christ says, I am the vine, ye are the branches ; may nevertheless so fall from God, as to perish everlastingly.

For thus saith our blessed Lord himself, “I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.”

“Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh it away.

“I am the vine, ye are the branches. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered, and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.”

Here we may observe, 1. The persons spoken of were in *Christ, branches of the true vine.*

* Rom. viii. 38, 39.

2. Some of these *branches* abide not in Christ, but the Father taketh them away.

3. The *branches* which abide not are cast forth, cast out from Christ and his church.

4. They are not only *cast forth* but *withered* : consequently never grafted in again. Nay,

5. They are not only *cast forth* and *withered*, but also *cast into the fire*. And,

6. They are *burned*. It is not possible for words more strongly to declare, that even those who are now branches in the true vine, may yet so fall, as to perish everlastingly.

18. By this clear, indisputable declaration of our Lord, we may interpret those which might be otherwise liable to dispute, wherein it is certain, whatever he meant beside, he did not mean to contradict himself. For example, "This is the Father's will, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing." Most sure : *all that God hath given him*, or (as it is expressed in the next verse) "every one which believeth on him," namely, to the end, "he will raise up at the last day," to reign with him for ever.

Again, * "I am the living bread—If any man eat of this bread, by faith, he shall live for ever." True : if he continue to eat thereof. And who can doubt it?

Again, † "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life ; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hands."

In the preceding text, the condition is only implied. In this it is plainly expressed. They are "my sheep" that "hear my voice," that "follow me" in all holiness. And "if you do those things, ye shall never fall." None shall "pluck you out of my hands."

* John vi. 51. † Chapter x. v. 27, 28.

Again, * “ Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.” *Having loved his own*, namely, the apostles (as the very next words, *which were in the world*, evidently shew) *he loved them to the end* of his life, and manifested that love to the last.

19. Once more, † “ Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are one.”

Great stress has been laid upon this text, and it has been hence inferred, that all *those whom the Father had given him* (a phrase frequently occurring in this chapter) must infallibly persevere to the end.

And yet in the very next verse, our Lord himself declares, that one of *those whom the Father had given him*, did not persevere unto the end, but perished everlastingly.

His own words are, ‡ “ Those that thou gavest me, I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition.”

So even one of these was finally lost ! A demonstration that the phrase, *Those whom thou hast given me*, signifies here (if not in most other places too) the twelve apostles, and them only.

20. On this occasion, I cannot but observe another common instance of begging the question, of taking for granted, what ought to be proved ; it is usually laid down, as an indisputable truth, that whatever our Lord speaks to or of his apostles, is to be applied to all believers. But this cannot be allowed by any who impartially search the scriptures. They cannot allow, without clear and particular proof, that any one of those texts, which related primarily to the apostles (as all men grant) belong to any but them.

V. 21. Fifthly, those who so effectually know Christ, as by that knowledge to have escaped the

* John xiii. 1.

† John xvii. 11.

‡ John xvii. 12.

pollutions of the world, may yet fall back into those pollutions, and perish everlastingly.

For thus saith the apostle Peter, * "If after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (the only possible way of escaping them) they are again entangled therein and overcome; the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

"For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they had known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them."

That the *knowledge of the way of righteousness*, which they had attained, was an inward experimental knowledge, is evident from that other expression, "They had escaped the pollutions of the world:" an expression parallel to that in the preceding chapter, † "Having escaped the corruption which is in the world." And in both chapters, this effect is ascribed to the same cause: termed in the first, "The knowledge of him who hath called us to glory and virtue;" in the second more explicitly, "The knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

And yet they lost that experimental knowledge of Christ and the way of righteousness: they fell back into the same pollutions they had escaped; and were "again entangled therein and overcome. They turned from the holy commandment delivered to them, so that their latter end was worse than their beginning."

Therefore those who so effectually know Christ, as by that knowledge to have escaped the pollutions of the world, may yet fall back into those pollutions and perish everlastingly.

22. And this is perfectly consistent with St. Peter's words, in the first chapter of his former epis-

* 2 Peter ii. 20, 21.

† 2 Peter i. 4.

tle : " Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." Undoubtedly so are all they who ever attain eternal salvation. It is the power of God only, and not our own, by which we are kept one day or one hour.

VI. 23. Sixthly, those who see the light of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ, and who have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, of the witness and the fruits of the Spirit, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

For thus saith the inspired writer to the Hebrews, * " It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost—if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance ; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."

Must not every unprejudiced person see the expressions here used are so strong and clear, that they cannot, without gross and palpable wresting, be understood of any but true believers ?

They " were once enlightened : " an expression familiar with the apostle, and never by him applied to any but believers. So, † " The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation. The eyes of your understanding being *enlightened*, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling. And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward that believe." So again, ‡ " God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." This is the light which no unbelievers have. They are utter strangers to such enlightening. || " The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the

* Heb. vi. 4. 6.

† Ephes. i. 17, 18, 19.

‡ 2 Cor. 4. 6.

|| 2 Cor. iv. 4.

light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them."

"They had tasted of the heavenly gift, (emphatically so called) and were made partakers of the *Holy Ghost*." So St. Peter likewise couples them together; * "Be baptised for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the *Holy Ghost*;" whereby the love of God was shed abroad in their heart, with all the other fruits of the spirit. Yea, it is remarkable, that our Lord himself in his grand commission to St. Paul (to which the apostle probably alludes in these words) comprises all these three particulars. † "I send thee to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God," here contracted into that one expression, (*They were enlightened*) "that they may receive forgiveness of sins (the heavenly gift) and an inheritance among them which are sanctified:" which are made partakers of the *Holy Ghost*, of all the sanctifying influences of the Spirit.

The expression; *They tasted* of the heavenly gift is taken from the Psalmist, ‡ "Taste and see that the Lord is good." As if he had said, be ye as assured of his love, as of any thing you see with your eyes. And let the assurance thereof be sweet to your soul, as honey is to your tongue.

And yet those who had been thus enlightened, had tasted this gift, and been thus partakers of the *Holy Ghost*, so fell away, that it was impossible to renew them again to repentance.

"But the apostle only makes a supposition, If they shall fall away."

I answer, The apostle makes no supposition at all. There is no *if* in the original. The words are, in plain English, "It is impossible to renew again unto repentance, those who were once enlightened and have fallen away:" therefore they must perish everlastingly.

* Acts ii. 38.

† Acts xxvi. 18.

‡ Ps. xxxiv. 8.

and, 3. That the condition is expressly mentioned in the very same sentence?

VIII. 27. Eighthly, Those who are sanctified by the blood of the covenant, may so fall from God, as to perish everlastingly.

For thus again saith the apostle, * “ If we sin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses’s law, died without mercy under two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing ?”

It is undeniably plain, 1. That the person mentioned here, was once sanctified by the blood of the covenant.

2. That he afterwards by known, wilful sin, trod under foot the Son of God : and, 3. That he hereby incurred a sorer punishment than death, namely, death everlastingly.

Therefore, those who are sanctified by the blood of the covenant, may yet so fall as to perish everlastingly.

28. “ What ! Can the blood of Christ burn in hell ? Or can the purchase of the blood of Christ go thither ?”

I answer, 1. The blood of Christ cannot burn in hell no more than it can be spilt on the earth. The heavens must contain both his flesh and blood, until the restitution of all things. But,

2. If the oracles of God are true, one who was purchased by the blood of Christ may go thither. For he that was sanctified by the blood of Christ, was purchased by the blood of Christ. But one who was sanctified by the blood of Christ, may nevertheless

* Heb. x. 26, &c.

go to hell; may fall under that fiery indignation, which shall for ever devour the adversaries.

29. "Can a child of God then go to hell? Or can a man be a child of God to-day, and a child of the devil to-morrow? If God is our Father once, is he not our Father always?" I answer,

1. A child of God, that is, a true believer (for *he* that believeth is born of God) while he continues a true believer, cannot go to hell. But, 2. If a believer make shipwreck of the faith, he is no longer a child of God. And then he may go to hell, yea, and certainly will, if he continue in unbelief. 3. If a believer may make shipwreck of the faith, then a man that believes now, may be an unbeliever some time hence; yea, very possibly to-morrow: But if so, he who is a child of God to-day, may be a child of the devil to-morrow. For 4. God is the Father of them that believe so long as they believe. But the devil is the father of them that believe not, whether they did once believe or no,

30. The sum of all is this. If the scriptures be true, those who are holy or righteous in the judgment of God himself; those who are endued with the faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conscience: those who are grafted into the good olive-tree, the spiritual, invisible church; those who are branches of the true vine, of whom Christ says, I am the vine, ye are the branches; those who so effectually know Christ, as by that knowledge to have escaped the pollutions of the world; those who see the light of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ, and who have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, of the witness and of the fruits of the Spirit: those who live by faith in the Son of God: those who are sanctified by the blood of the covenant: may nevertheless so fall from God, as to perish everlastingly.

Therefore let him that standeth, take heed lest he fall.

SECTION V.

Of Christian Perfection.

*A Plain Account of Christian Perfection, by the Rev.
John Wesley.*

WHAT I purpose in the following papers is, to give a plain and distinct account of the doctrine of Christian Perfection.

For this purpose I shall endeavour to shew, 1. In what sense Christians are not, 2. In what sense they are perfect.

I. In what sense they are not. They are not perfect in knowledge. They are not free from ignorance, no, nor from mistake. We are no more to expect any living man to be infallible than to be omniscient. They are not free from infirmities; such as weakness, or slowness of understanding, irregular quickness or heaviness of imagination. Such in another kind are, impropriety of language, an ungracefulness of pronunciation, to which one might add a thousand nameless defects, either in conversation or behaviour. *N. B.* From such infirmities as these none are perfectly freed, till their spirit returns to God, Neither can we expect till then to be freed from temptation: for the servant is not above his master. But neither in this sense is there any absolute Perfection on earth. There is no perfection, which does not admit of a continual increase.

II. In what sense then are they perfect? Observe, we are not now speaking of babes in Christ, but adult Christians. But even babes in Christ are so far perfect, as not to commit sin. This St. John affirms expressly.

But does not the scripture say, *A just man sinneth seven times a day*? It does not. Indeed it says, *a just man falleth seven times*. But this is quite another thing. For, first, the words *a day*, are not in the

text. Secondly, here is no mention of *falling into sin* at all. What is here mentioned is, *falling into temporal affliction*.

But St. James says, chap. iii. 2. "*In many things we offend all.*" True ; but who are the persons here spoken of? Why, those *many masters* or teachers whom God had not sent : not the apostle himself, nor any real christian. That in the word *we* (used by a figure of speech, common in all other, as well as the inspired writings) the apostle could not possibly include himself, or any other true believer, appears, first, from the ninth verse, *Therewith bless we God, and therewith curse we men.* Surely not *we apostles* ! Not *we believers* ! Secondly, from the words preceding the text : *My brethren, be not many masters or teachers, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. For in many things we offend all.* We ! Who ! Not the apostles nor true believers, but they who were to *receive the greater condemnation*, because of those many offences. Nay, thirdly, the verse itself proves, that *we offend all* cannot be spoken either of all men, or of all Christians. For in it immediately follows the mention of a man who *offends not*, as the *we* first mentioned did : from whom therefore he is professedly contradistinguished and pronounced *a perfect man*.

But St. John himself says. *If we "say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves. And, if we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."*

I answer, 1. The tenth verse fixes the sense of the eighth : *If we say we have no sin* in the former, being explained by *If we say we have not sinned*, in the latter verse : 2. The point under consideration is not, whether we have or have not sinned *heretofore* ; and neither of these verses assert, that we do sin or commit sin *now* 3. The ninth verse explains both the eighth and tenth. *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us*

from all unrighteousness. As if he had said, I have before affirmed, *The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.* And no man can say, I need it not ; I have no sin to be cleansed from. *If we say we have no sin, that we have not sinned, we deceive ourselves, and make God a liar.* But, *if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, not only to forgive us our sins, but also to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, that we may go and sin no more.* In conformity therefore both to the doctrine of St. John, and the whole tenor of the New Testament, we fix this Conclusion, A Christian is so far perfect as not to commit sin.

This is the glorious privilege of every christian, yea, though he be but a babe in Christ. But it is only of grown christians it can be affirmed, they are in such a sense perfect, as, secondly, to be freed from evil desires and evil tempers. First, from evil or sinful desires. Indeed, whence should they spring ? Out of the heart of man. But if the heart be no longer evil, then evil desires no longer proceed out of it ; *for a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit.*

And as they are freed from evil desires, so likewise from evil tempers. Every one of these can say with St. Paul, *I am crucified with Christ : nevertheless, I live : yet not I, but Christ liveth in me :* words that manifestly describe a deliverance from inward, as well as from outward sin. This is expressed both negatively, *I live not :* my evil nature, the body of sin is destroyed : and positively, *Christ liveth in me,* and therefore, all that is holy, and just, and good. Indeed, both these, *Christ liveth in me,* and *I live not,* are inseparably connected. For what communion hath light with darkness, or Christ with Belial ?

He therefore who liveth in these Christians, hath *purified their hearts by faith :* insomuch, that every one that has Christ in him, *the hope of glory, puri-*

fieth himself even as he is pure. He is purified from pride ; for Christ was lowly in heart. He is pure from evil desire and self-will ; for Christ desired only to do the will of his Father. And he is pure from anger, in the common sense of the word ; for Christ was meek and gentle. I say, in the common sense of the word : for he is *angry* at sin, while he is grieved for the sinner. He feels a displacency at every offence against God, and tender compassion to the offender.

Thus doth Jesus save his people from their sins, not only from outward sins, but from the sins of their hearts. "True," say some, "but not till death, not in this world." Nay, St. John says, *Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world.* The apostle here, beyond all contradiction, speaks of himself and other living christians, of whom he flatly affirms, that not only at or after death, but *in this world* they are *as their Master*.

Exactly agreeable to this, are his words in the first chapter : "God is Light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." And again : "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Now, it is evident, the apostle here speaks of a deliverance wrought in this world. For he saith not, The blood of Christ *will cleanse* (at the hour of death, or in the day of judgment) but it *cleanseth* at the time present, us living christians, *from all sin*. And it is equally evident, that if any sin remain, we are not cleansed from all sin. If *any* unrighteousness remain in the soul, it is not cleansed from *all* unrighteousness. Neither let any say, that this relates to justification only, or the cleansing us from the guilt of sin : first, because this is confounding together what the apos-

He clearly distinguishes, who mentions first, *to forgive us our sins*, and then to cleanse us from all unrighteousness : secondly, because this is asserting justification by works, in the strongest sense possible : it is making all inward, as well as all outward holiness, necessarily previous to justification. For if the cleansing here spoken of, is no other than the cleansing us from the guilt of sin, then we are not cleansed from guilt, that is, not justified, unless on condition of walking in the light, as he is in the light. It remains then, that christians are saved in this world from all sin, from all unrighteousness ; that they are now in such a sense perfect as not to commit sin, and to be freed from evil desires and evil tempers.

This great gift of God, the salvation of their souls, is no other than the image of God stamped on their hearts. *It is a renewal in the spirit of their minds, after the likeness of him that created them.* God hath now laid the axe unto the root of the tree, *purifying their hearts by faith*, and “cleansing all the thoughts of their hearts by the inspiration of his holy Spirit.” Having this hope, that they shall see God as he is, they *purify themselves even as he is pure*, and are holy, as he that hath called them is holy, in all manner of conversation. *Not that they have already attained all that they shall attain, or are already (in this sense) perfect.* But they daily go on from strength to strength : beholding now, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, they are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord.

And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty, such liberty from the law of sin and death, as the children of this world will not believe, though a man declare it unto them. The Son hath made them free who are thus born of God, from that great root of sin and bitterness, Pride. They feel that all their sufficiency is of God, that it is he alone who is in all their thoughts, and worketh in them both to will

and to do, of his good pleasure. They feel that it is not they that speak, but the Spirit of their Father who speaketh in them ; and that whatsoever is done by their hands, the Father who is in them, he doth the works. So that God is to them all in all, and they feel themselves as nothing in his sight. They are freed from *Self-will*, as desiring nothing but the holy and perfect will of God, and continually crying in their inmost soul, "Father, thy will be done." At all times, their souls are even and calm ; their hearts are stedfast and immoveable. Their peace, flowing as a river, *passeth all understanding*, and they rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Not that every one is a child of the devil, till he is thus renewed in love. On the contrary, whoever has a sure confidence in God, that through the merits of Christ his sins are forgiven, he is a child of God, and if he abide in him, an heir of all the promises. Neither ought he in any wise to cast away his confidence, or to deny the faith he has received, because it is weak, or because it is *tried with fire*, so that his soul is *in heaviness through manifold temptations*.

Neither dare we affirm, as some have done, that *all this salvation* is given at once. There is indeed an *instantaneous* (as well as a *gradual*) work of God in his children : and there wants not, we know, a cloud of witnesses, who have received, in one moment, either a clear sense of the forgiveness of their sins, or the abiding witness of the Holy Spirit. But we do not know a single instance, in any place, of a person's receiving in one and the same moment, remission of sins, the abiding witness of the Spirit, and a clean heart.

Indeed how God may work, we cannot tell : But the general manner wherein he does work is this : those who once trusted in themselves, that they were righteous, that they were *rich, and increased in goods, and had need of nothing*, are by the Spirit of God, ap-

plying his word, convinced that they are poor and naked. All the things that they have done, are brought to their remembrance, and set in array before them, so that they see the wrath of God hanging over their heads, and feel that they deserve the damnation of hell. In their trouble they cry unto the Lord, and he shews them that he hath taken away their sins, and opens the kingdom of heaven in their hearts; *righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.* Sorrow and pain are fled away, and *sin has no more dominion over them.* Knowing they are *justified freely* through faith in Christ's blood, they *have peace with God through Jesus Christ*; they *rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, and the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts.*

In this peace they remain for days, or weeks, or months, and commonly suppose, they shall not know war any more: till some of their old enemies, their bosom-sins, or the sin which *did* most easily beset them (perhaps anger or desire) assault them again, and thrust sore at them that they may fall. Then arises fear, that they shall not endure to the end, and often doubt, whether God has not forgotten them, or whether they did not deceive themselves, in thinking their sins were forgiven. Under these clouds, especially if they reason with the devil, they go *mourning* all the day long. But it is seldom long before their Lord answers for himself, sending them the Holy Ghost to *comfort* them, to bear witness continually with their spirits, that they are the children of God. Then they are indeed *meek*, and gentle, and teachable, even as a little child. And now first do they see the ground of their hearts, which God before would not disclose unto them, lest the soul should fail before him, and the spirit which he had made. Now they see all the hidden abominations there, the depth of pride, self-will, and hell, yet having the witness in themselves, 'Thou art an heir of God, a joint heir with Christ,' even in the midst of this fiery

trial, which continually heightens both the strong sense they then have of their inability to help themselves, and the inexpressible *hunger* they feel *after* a full renewal in the image of God in *righteousness and true holiness*. Then God is mindful of the desire of them that fear him, and gives them a single eye, and a pure heart: he stamps upon them his own image and superscription: he createth them a new in Christ Jesus: he *cometh unto* them with his Son and Blessed Spirit, and fixing his abode in their souls, bringeth them into the *rest* which *remaineth for the people of God*.

To cast a fuller light on this important subject, I shall lay before the reader, the Minutes of several of our general Conferences on this weighty, this momentous doctrine.

1. On Monday, June 25th, 1744, our first Conference began, six clergymen and all our preachers being present. The next morning we seriously considered the doctrine of Sanctification or Christian Perfection. The questions asked concerning it, and the substance of the answers given were as follows:

Q. What is it to be *sanctified*?

A. To be renewed in the image of God, in *righteousness and true holiness*.

Q. What is implied in being a *perfect Christian*?

A. The loving God with all our heart, and mind, and soul. Deut. vi. 5.

Q. Does this imply that *all* inward sin is taken away?

A. Undoubtedly: or how can we be said to be *saved from all our uncleannesses*? Ezek. xxxvi. 29.

2. Our second Conference began August 1, 1745. The next morning we spoke of Sanctification, as follows:

Q. When does inward sanctification begin?

A. In the moment a man is justified. Yet sin remains in him, yea, the seed of sin, till he is *sancti-*

fied throughout. From that time a believer gradually dies to sin, and grows in grace.

Q. Is this ordinarily given till a little before death?

A. It is not to those who expect it no sooner.

Q. In what manner should we preach sanctification?

A. Always by way of promise ; always *drawing* rather than *driving*.

3. Our third Conference began Tuesday, May 26, 1746.

In this we carefully read over the minutes of the two preceding Conferences, to observe whether any thing contained therein might be retrenched or altered on more mature consideration, But we did not see cause to alter in any respect what we had agreed on before.

4. Our fourth Conference began on Thursday, June 16th, 1747. As several persons were present, who did not believe the doctrine of Christian perfection, we agreed to examine it from the foundation.

In order to this it was asked,

“How much is allowed by our brethren who differ from us, with regard to entire sanctification?”

A. They grant, 1. That every one must be entirely sanctified in the article of death: 2. That till then, a believer may daily grow in grace, come nearer and nearer to perfection: 3. That we ought to be continually pressing after it, and to exhort all others so to do.

Q. What is the point where we divide?

A. It is this : should we expect to be saved from *all sin* before the article of death?

Q. Is there any clear scripture *promise* of this, That God will save us from *all sin*?

A. There is, Psalm cxxx. 8. *He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.*

This is more largely expressed in the prophecy of Ezekiel; “Then will I sprinkle clean water upon

you, and ye shall be clean : from *all* your filthiness, and from *all* your idols will I cleanse you—I will also save you from *all your uncleannesses*,” chap. xxxvi. ver. 25, 29. No promise can be more clear. And to this the apostle plainly refers in that exhortation, “ Having these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God ;” 2 Cor. vii. 1. Equally clear and express is that ancient promise, “ The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul.” Deut. xxx. 6.

Q. But does any *assertion* answerable to this, occur in the New Testament ?

A. There does : and that laid down in the plainest terms. So, 1 John iii. 8. “ For this purpose, the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil :” *the works of the devil*, without any limitation or restriction : but all sin is *the work of the devil*. Parallel to which is the assertion of St. Paul, Eph. v. 25, 27. “ Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it—that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it might be holy and without blemish.”

And to the same effect is his assertion in the eighth of the Romans, verse 3, 4. “ God sent his Son—that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

Q. Does the New Testament afford any farther ground for expecting to be saved from *all sin* ?

A. Undoubtedly it does, both in those *prayers* and *commands*, which are equivalent to the strongest assertions.

Q. What prayers do you mean ?

A. Prayers for entire sanctification, which, were there no such thing, would be mere mockery of God. Such in particular are, 1. “ Deliver us from evil.”

Now when this is done, when we are delivered from all evil, there can be no sin remaining. 2. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who shall believe on me through their word : that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us : I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in in one ;" John xvii. ver. 20, 21, 23. 3. "I bow my knees unto the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he would grant you, that ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge that ye may be filled with all the fulness of God ;" Eph. iii. 14, &c. 4. "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly. And I pray God, your whole spirit, soul, and body, may be preserved blameless, unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thess. v. 23.

Q. What *command* is there to the same effect ?

A. 1. "Be ye perfect, as your Father who is in heaven is perfect ;" Matt. v. 48. 2. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind ;" Matt. xxii. 37. But if the love of God fill *all the heart*, there can be no sin there.

Q. But how does it appear, that this is to be done before the article of death ?

A. 1. From the very nature of a command, which is not given to the dead but to the living. Therefore "thou shalt love God with all thy heart," cannot mean, Thou shalt do this when thou diest, but while thou livest.

2. From express texts of scripture. 1 "The grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men ; teaching us, that, denying ungodly and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world ; looking for the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself

for us, that he might redeem us from *all iniquity*, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works ;” Tit. ii. 11—14. 2. “ He hath raised up an horn of salvation for us—to perform the mercy promised to our fathers ; the oath which he sware to our father Abraham, that he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, should serve him without fear, in holiness, and righteousness before him, *all the days of our life.*” Luke i. ver. 69, &c.

Q. Is there any *example* in scripture, of persons who had attained to this ?

A. Yes : St. John and all those of whom he says, “ Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world.” 1 John iv. 17.

Q. Are we not apt to have a secret distaste to any who say they are saved from all sin ?

A. It is very possible we may, and that upon several grounds : partly from a concern for the good of souls, who may be hurt, if these are not what they profess : partly from a kind of implicit envy at those who speak of higher attainments than our own : and partly from our natural slowness and unreadiness of heart, to believe the works of God.

Q. Why may we not continue in the joy of faith, till we are *perfected in love* ?

A. Why indeed ? Since holy grief does not quench this joy : since even while we are under the cross, while we deeply partake of the sufferings of Christ, we may rejoice with joy unspeakable.

5. At the conference in the year 1759, perceiving some danger that a diversity of sentiments should insensibly steal in among us, we again largely considered this doctrine. And soon after I published “ Thoughts on Christian perfection,” prefaced with the following advertisement :

“ The following tract is by no means designed, to gratify the curiosity of any man. It is not intended

to prove the doctrine at large, in opposition to those who explode and ridicule it : no, nor to answer the numerous objections against it, which may be raised even by serious men. All I intend here, is simply to declare what are my sentiments on this head : what Christian perfection does, according to my apprehension, include, and what it does not ; and to add a few practical observations and directions relative to the subject."

"As these thoughts were at first thrown together by way of question and answer, I let them continue in the same form."

Q. What is Christian Perfection ?

A. The loving God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. This implies, that no wrong temper, none contrary to love, remains in the soul : and that all the thoughts, words and actions, are governed by pure love.

Q. Do you affirm, that this perfection excludes all infirmities, ignorance, and mistake ?

A. I continually affirm quite the contrary, and always have done so.

Q. But how can every thought, word and work, be governed by pure love, and the man be subject at the same time to ignorance and mistake ?

A. I see no contradiction here. "A man may be filled with pure love, and still be liable to mistake." Indeed I do not expect to be freed from actual mistakes, till this mortal puts on immortality. I believe this to be a natural consequence of the soul's dwelling in flesh and blood. For we cannot now *think* at all, but by the mediation of these bodily organs, which have suffered equally with the rest of our frame. And hence we cannot avoid sometimes *thinking wrong*, till this corruptible shall have put on incorruption.

But we may carry this thought farther yet. A mistake in judgment may possibly occasion a mistake in practice. For instance ; Mr. De Renty's

mistake touching the nature of mortification, arising from prejudice of education, occasioned that practical mistake, his wearing an iron girdle. And a thousand such instances there may be, even in those who are in the highest state of grace. Yet where every word and action springs from love, such a mistake is not properly a *sin*. However it cannot bear the rigour of God's justice, but needs the atoning blood.

Q. What was the judgment of all our brethren, who met at Bristol in August 1758, on this head?

A. It was expressed in these words : 1. Every one may mistake as long as he lives ; 2. A mistake in *opinion* may occasion a mistake in *practice* : 3. Every such mistake is a transgression of the perfect law. Therefore, 4. Every such mistake, were it not for the blood of atonement, would expose to eternal damnation. 5. It follows, that the most perfect have continual need of the merits of Christ, even for their actual transgressions, and may say for themselves, as well as for their brethren, *Forgive us our trespasses*.

This easily accounts for what might otherwise seem to be utterly unaccountable : namely, that those who are not offended when we speak of the highest degree of love, yet will not hear of living *without sin*. The reason is, they know all men are liable to mistake, and that in practice as well as in judgment. But they do not know, or do not observe, that this is not sin, if love is the sole principle of action.

Q. But still, if they live without sin, does not this exclude the necessity of a Mediator? At least, is it not plain, that they stand no longer in need of Christ in his priestly office?

A. Far from it. None feel their need of Christ like these : none so entirely depend upon him. For Christ does not give life to the soul separate from, but in and with himself. Hence his words are equally true of all men, in whatsoever state of grace they are, *As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it*

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abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me : without (or separate from) me, ye can do nothing.

In every state we need Christ in the following respects : 1. Whatever grace we receive, it is a free gift from him : 2. We receive it as his purchase, merely in consideration of the price he paid : 3. We have this grace not only *from* Christ, but *in* him. For our perfection is not like that of a tree, which flourishes by the sap derived from its own root, but, as was said before, like that of a branch, which united to the vine, bears fruit, but severed from it, *is dried up and withered* : 4. All our blessings, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, depend on his intercession for us, which is one branch of his priestly office, whereof therefore we have always equal need : 5. The best of men still need Christ in his priestly office, to atone for their omissions, their short-comings (as some not improperly speak,) their mistakes in judgment and practice, and their defects of various kinds. For these are all deviations from the perfect law, and consequently need an atonement. Yet that they are not properly sins, we apprehend may appear from the words of St. Paul, *He that loveth another, hath fulfilled the law ; for love is the fulfilling of the law.** Now mistakes and whatever infirmities, necessarily flow from the corruptible state of the body, are no way contrary to love, nor therefore in the scripture sense, *sin*.

To explain myself a little farther on this head : 1. Not only *sin properly so called*, that is, a voluntary transgression of a known law, but *sin, improperly so called*, that is, an involuntary transgression of a divine law, known or unknown, needs the atoning blood. 2. I believe there is no such perfection in this life, as excludes these involuntary transgressions, which I apprehend to be naturally consequent on the ignorance and mistakes inseparable

* Romans xiii. 8, 10.

from mortality 3. Therefore *sinless perfection* is a phrase I never use, lest I should *seem* to contradict myself. 4. I believe a person filled with the love of God, is still liable to these involuntary transgressions. 5. Such transgressions you may call *sins*, if you please ; I do not, for the reasons above-mentioned.

Q. What advice would you give to those that do, and those that do not call them so ?

A. Let those that do not call them *sins*, never think that themselves, or any other persons, are in such a state, as that they can stand before infinite justice without a Mediator. This must argue either the deepest ignorance, or the highest arrogance and presumption.

Let those who do call them so, beware how they confound these *defects* with *sins*, properly so called. But how will they avoid it? How will these be distinguished from those, if they are all promiscuously called *sins* ? I am much afraid, if we should allow any *sins* to be consistent with Christian perfection, few would confine the idea, to those *defects*, concerning which only the assertion could be true.

Q. But how can a liableness to mistake consist with perfect love ? 2. Is not a person who is perfected in love, every moment under its influence ? And can any mistake flow from pure love ?

A. I answer, 1. Many mistakes may *consist* with pure love : 2. Some may *accidentally flow* from it. I mean love itself may incline us to mistake. The pure love of our neighbour springing from the love of God, *thinketh no evil, believeth and hopeth all things*. Now this very temper, unsuspecting, ready to believe and hope the best of all men, may occasion our thinking some men better than they really are. Here then is a manifest mistake, *accidentally flowing* from pure love.

Q. How then shall we avoid setting Christian perfection too high or too low ?

A. By keeping to the bible, and setting it just as high as the scripture does. It is nothing higher and nothing lower than this : the pure love of God and man : the loving God with all our heart and soul, and our neighbour as ourselves : it is love governing the heart and life, running through all our tempers, words, and actions.

Q. Suppose one had attained to this, would you advise him to speak of it ?

A. At first perhaps he would scarce be able to refrain, the fire would be so hot within him : his desire to declare the loving kindness of the Lord, carrying him away like a torrent. But afterwards he might : and then it would be adviseable, not to speak of it to them that know not God. It is most likely it would only provoke them to contradict and blaspheme : nor to others without some particular reason, without some good in view. And then he should have especial care, to avoid all appearance of boasting ; to speak with the deepest humility and reverence, giving all the glory to God.

Q. But would it not be better to be entirely silent ? Not to speak of it at all ?

A. By silence he might avoid many crosses, which will naturally and necessarily ensue, if he simply declare, even among believers, what God has wrought in his soul. If therefore such a one were to confer with flesh and blood, he would be entirely silent. But this could not be done with a clear conscience ; for undoubtedly he ought to speak. *Men* do not light a candle to put it under a bushel : much less does the all-wise God. He does not raise such a monument of his power and love, to hide it from all mankind. Rather he intends it as a general blessing to those who are simple of heart. He designs thereby not barely the happiness of that individual person, but the animating and encouraging others, to follow after the same blessing. His will is, *that many shall see it and rejoice, and put their trust*

in the Lord. Nor does any thing under heaven more quicken the desires of those who are justified, than to converse with those whom they believe to have experienced a still higher salvation. This places that salvation full in their view, and increases their hunger and thirst after it : an advantage which must have been entirely lost, had the person so saved buried himself in silence.

Q. But is there no way to prevent those crosses, which usually fall on those who speak of being thus saved ?

A. It seems they cannot be prevented altogether, while so much of nature remains even in believers. But something might be done, if the preacher in every place would, 1. Talk freely with all who speak thus : and, 2. Labour to prevent the unjust or unkind treatment of those, in favour of whom there is reasonable proof.

Q. What is reasonable proof ? How may we certainly know one that is saved from all sin ?

A. We cannot *infallibly* know one that is thus saved (no, nor even one that is justified) unless it should please God to endow us with the miraculous discernment of spirits. But we apprehend these would be sufficient proofs to any reasonable man, and such as would leave little room to doubt either the truth or depth of the work : 1. If we had clear evidence of his exemplary behaviour, for some time before his supposed change. This would give us reason to believe, he would not *lie for God*, but speak neither more nor less than he felt. 2. If he gave a distinct account of the time and manner wherein the change was wrought, with sound speech which could not be reprov'd—and, 3. If it appeared that all his subsequent words and actions were holy and unblameable.

The short of the matter is this : 1. I have abundant reason to believe this person will not lie. 2. He testifies before God, " I feel no sin, but all love : I

pray, rejoice, and give thanks without ceasing: and I have as clear an inward witness, that I am fully renewed, as that I am justified." Now, if I have nothing to oppose to this plain testimony, I ought in reason to believe it.

It avails nothing to object; "But I know several things wherein he is quite mistaken." For it has been allowed, that all who are in the body, are liable to mistake: and that a mistake in judgment may sometimes occasion a mistake in practice: (though great care is to be taken, that no ill use be made of this concession.) For instance; even one that is perfected in love, may mistake with regard to another person, and may think him, in a particular case, to be more or less faulty than he really is. And hence he may speak to him with more or less severity than the truth requires. And in this sense, (though that be not the primary meaning of St. James) *In many things we offend all.*—This, therefore is no proof at all, that the person so speaking is not perfected in love.

Q. But is it not a proof, if he is *surprised* or *flattered* by a noise, a fall, or some sudden danger?

A. It is not: for one may start, tremble, change colour, or be otherwise disordered in body, while the soul is calmly staid on God, and remains in perfect peace. Nay, the mind itself may be deeply distressed, may be exceeding sorrowful, may be perplexed and pressed down by heaviness and anguish, even to agony, while the heart cleaves to God by perfect love, and the will is wholly resigned to him. Was it not so with the Son of God himself? Does any child of man endure the distress, the anguish, the agony, which he sustained? And yet he *knew no sin*.

Q. But can any who have a pure heart prefer pleasing to unpleasing food? Or use any pleasure of sense which is not strictly necessary? If so, how do they differ from others?

A. The difference between these and others in taking pleasant food, is, 1. They need none of these things to make them happy ; for they have a spring of happiness within. They see and love God.—Hence they *rejoice evermore*, and *in every thing give thanks*. 2. They may use them, but they do not seek them. 3. They use them *sparingly*, and not for the sake of the thing itself. This being premised, we answer directly, such a one may use pleasing food, without the danger which attends those who are not saved from sin. He may prefer it to unpleasing, tho' equally wholesome food, as a means of increasing thankfulness, with a single eye to God, *who giveth us all things richly to enjoy* : on the same principle, he may smell to a flower, or eat a bunch of grapes, or take any other pleasure which does not lessen but increase his delight in God. Therefore neither can we say, that one perfected in love would be incapable of marriage, and of worldly business : if he were called thereto, he would be more capable than ever : as being able to do all things without hurry or carefulness, without any distraction of spirit.

Q. But what does the perfect one do more than others ? More than common believers ?

A. Perhaps nothing : so may the providence of God have hedged him in, by outward circumstances. Perhaps not so much ; (though he desires and longs to *spend and be spent* for God :) at least not externally : he may neither speak so many words, nor do so many works. As neither did our Lord himself speak so many words, or do so many, no, nor so great works, as some of his apostles (John xiv. 12.) But this is no proof that he has not more grace.

Q. But is not *this* a proof against him ? *I feel no power either in his words or prayer* ?

A. It is not : for perhaps that is your own fault. You are not likely to feel any power therein, if any of these hinderances lie in the way ; 1. Your own

deadness of soul. The dead Pharisees felt *no power* even in his words, who *shake as never man shake* : 2. The *guilt* of some unrepented sin, lying upon the conscience : 3. *Prejudice* toward him of any kind : 4. Your not *believing* that state to be attainable, wherein he professes to be : 5. Believing it to be *ungodliness* to think or own he has attained it : 6. *Over-valuing* or *idolizing* him : 7. *Over-valuing* *yourself* and your own judgment. If any of these be the case, what wonder is it, that you feel no power in any thing he says ? But do not others feel it ? If they do, your argument falls to the ground. And if they do not, do none of these hinderances lie in their way too ? You must be certain of this, before you can build any argument thereon. And even then your argument will prove no more, than that grace and gifts do not always go together.

“ But he does not come up to *my idea* of a perfect Christian.” And perhaps no one ever did or ever will. For *your idea* may go *beyond*, or at least *beside* the scriptural account. It may include *more* than the bible includes therein, or however *something* which that does not include. Christian perfection is, pure love filling the heart and governing all the words and actions. If your idea includes any thing *more*, or any thing *else*, it is not scriptural : and then no wonder that a scripturally-perfect Christian does not come up to it.

I fear many stumble on this stumbling-block.— They include as many ingredients as they please, not according to scripture, but their own imagination, in their *idea* of one that is perfect in love ; and then readily deny any one to be such, who does not answer that imaginary idea.

The more care should *we* take, to keep the simple, scriptural account continually in our eye : Pure love reigning alone in the heart and life, this is the whole of Christian perfection.

Q. When may a person judge himself to have attained this ?

A. When after having been fully convinced of inbred sin, by a far deeper and clearer conviction, than that which he experienced before justification, and after having experienced a gradual mortification of it, he experiences a total death to sin, and an entire renewal in the love and image of God, so as to *re-joice evermore, to pray without ceasing, and in every thing to give thanks.* Not that "to feel all love and no sin," is a sufficient proof. Several have experienced this for a time, before their souls were fully renewed. None, therefore, ought to believe, that the work is done, till there is added the testimony of the Spirit, witnessing his entire sanctification, as clearly as his justification.

Q. But whence is it, that some imagine they are thus sanctified, when in reality they are not?

A. It is hence : They do not judge by *all* the preceding marks, but either by *part* of them, or by *others*, that are ambiguous. But I know no instance of a person attending to them all, and yet deceived in this matter. I believe there can be none in the world. If a man be deeply and fully convinced, after justification, of inbred sin ; if he then experience a gradual mortification of sin, and afterwards an entire renewal in the image of God : if to this change, immensely greater than that wrought when he was justified, be added a clear, direct witness of the renewal : I judge it next to impossible this man should be deceived herein. And if one whom I know to be a man of veracity, testify these things to me, I ought not, without some sufficient reason, to reject his testimony.

Q. Is this death to sin, and renewal in love, gradual or instantaneous ?

A. A man may be *dying* for some time ; yet he does not properly speaking, *die*, till the instant the soul is separated from the body ; and in that instant he lives the life of eternity. In like manner, he may be *dying to sin* for some time : yet he is not *dead to*

sin, until *sin* is separated from his soul. And in that instant he lives the full life of love. And as the change undergone when the body dies, is of a different kind, and infinitely greater than any we had known before, yea, such as till then it is impossible to conceive ; so the change wrought when the soul dies to *sin*, is of a different kind, and infinitely greater than any before, and than any can conceive till he experiences it. Yet he still grows in grace, in the knowledge of Christ, in the love and image of God : and will do so, not only till death, but probably to all eternity.

Q. How are we to wait for this change ?

A. Not in careless indifference, or indolent inactivity : but in vigorous, universal obedience, in a zealous keeping of all the commandments, in watchfulness and painfulness, in denying ourselves, and taking up our cross daily ; as well as in earnest prayer and fasting, and a close attendance on all the ordinances of God. And if any man dream of attaining it any other way (yea, or of *keeping* it, when it is attained, when he has received it even in the largest measure) he deceiveth his own soul. It is true we receive it by simple faith. But God does not, will not give that faith, unless we seek it with all diligence, in the way which he hath ordained.

This consideration may satisfy those who inquire, Why so few have received the blessing ? Inquire, how many are seeking it in *this way* ; and you have a sufficient answer.

Prayer especially is wanting. Who *continues instant* therein ? Who *wrestles with God* for this very thing ? So *ye have not, because ye ask not* : or because *ye ask amiss*, namely, " That you may be renewed *before you die*." Before you die ! Will that content you ? Nay, but ask, that it may be done *now* ! To-day ! While it is called to-day ! Do not call this " setting God a time." Certainly *to-day* is *his time* as well as *to-morrow*. Make haste, man, make haste ! Let

Thy soul break out in strong desire
 The perfect bliss to prove !
 Thy longing heart be all on fire
 To be dissolv'd in love !

Q. But may we continue in peace and joy, till we are perfect in love ?

A. Certainly we may ; for the kingdom of God is not divided against itself. Therefore, let not believers be discouraged from *rejoicing in the Lord always*. And yet we may be sensibly pained at the sinful nature that still remains in us. It is good for us to have a piercing sense of this and a vehement desire to be delivered from it. But this should only incite us the more zealously to fly every moment to our strong Helper, the more earnestly to *press forward to the mark, the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus*. And when the sense of our sin most abounds, the sense of his love should much more abound.

Q. How should we treat those who think they have attained ?

A. Examine them candidly, and exhort them to pray fervently that God would shew them all that is in their hearts. The most earnest exhortations to abound in every grace, and the strongest cautions to avoid all evil, are given throughout the New Testament, to those who are in the highest state of grace. But this should be done with the utmost tenderness, and without any harshness, sternness, or sourness. We should carefully avoid the very appearance of anger, unkindness, or contempt. Leave it to Satan thus to tempt, and to his children to cry out, *Let us examine him with despitefulness and torture, that we may know his meekness, and prove his patience*. If they are faithful to the grace given, they are in no danger of perishing by mistake : no, not if they remain in that mistake till their spirit is returning to God.

Q. But what hurt can it do to deal harshly with them?

A. Either they are mistaken or they are not. If they are, it may destroy their souls. This is nothing impossible, no, nor improbable. It may so enrage or so discourage them, that they will sink, and rise no more. If they are not mistaken, it may grieve those whom God has not grieved, and do much hurt unto our own souls. For undoubtedly he that 'toucheth them toucheth, as it were' the apple of God's eye. If they are indeed full of his Spirit, to behave unkindly or contemptuously to them, is doing no little despite to the Spirit of grace. Hereby likewise we feed and increase in ourselves evil surmising and many wrong tempers. To instance only one. What self-sufficiency is this, to set ourselves up for inquisitors-general, or peremptory judges in these deep things of God?—Are we qualified for the office? Can we pronounce in all cases, How far infirmity reaches? What may, and what may not be resolved into it? What may in all circumstances, and what may not, consist with perfect love? Can we precisely determine, How it will influence the look, the gesture, the tone of voice? If we can, doubtless we are *the men, and wisdom shall die with us!*

Q. But if they are displeased at our not believing them, is not this a full proof against them?

A. According as that displeasure is: if they are angry, it is a proof against them; if they are grieved, it is not. They ought to be grieved, if we disbelieve a real work of God, and thereby deprive ourselves of the advantage we might have received from it. And we may easily mistake this grief for anger, as the outward expressions of both are much alike.

Q. But is it not well to find out those, who fancy they have attained, when they have not?

A. It is well to do it by mild, loving examination. But it is not well to triumph even over these. It is ex-

tremely wrong, if we *find* such an instance, to rejoice, as if we had found great spoils. Ought we not rather to grieve, to be deeply concerned, to let our eyes run down with tears? Here is one who *seemed* to be a living proof of God's power to *save to the uttermost*, but, alas! it is not as we hoped! He is *weighed in the balance and found wanting!* And is this matter of joy? Ought we not to rejoice a thousand times more, if we can find nothing but pure love?

"But he is deceived." What then? It is a harmless mistake, while he feels nothing but love in his heart. It is a mistake which generally argues great grace, a high degree both of holiness and happiness. This should be a matter of real joy to all that are simple of heart, not the mistake itself, but the height of grace which for a time occasions it. I rejoice that this soul is always happy in Christ, always full of prayer and thanksgiving. I rejoice that he feels no unholy temper, but the pure love of God continually. And I *will* rejoice, if sin is *suspended*, till it is totally *destroyed*?

Q. Is there no danger then in a man's being thus deceived?

A. Not at the time that he feels no sin. There was danger before, and there will be again, when he comes into fresh trials. But so long as he feels nothing but love animating all his thoughts, and words, and actions, he is in no danger: he is not only happy, but safe, *under the shadow of the Almighty*. And for God's sake, let him continue in that love as long as he can: mean time you may do well, to warn him of the danger that *will be*, if his love grow cold and sin revive, even the danger of casting away hope; and supposing, that because he hath not attained yet, therefore he never shall.

Q. But what if none have attained it yet? What if all who think so are deceived?

A. Convince me of this, and I will preach it no more. But understand me right. I do not build any doctrine on this or that person. This or any

other man may be deceived, and I am not moved. But if there be none made perfect in love yet, God has not sent me to preach Christian perfection.

Put a parallel case. For many years I have preached, "There is a peace of God which passeth all understanding." Convince me that this word has fallen to the ground; that in all these years none have attained this peace: that there is no living witness of it at this day, and I will preach it no more.

"O but several persons have died in that peace." Perhaps so: but I want *living* witnesses. I cannot indeed be infallibly certain, that this or that person is a witness. But if I were certain there are none such, I should have done with this doctrine.

"You misunderstand me. I believe some who died in this love, enjoyed it long before their death. But I was not certain, that their former testimony was true, till some hours before they died."

You had not an *infallible* certainty then. And a *reasonable* certainty you might have had before: such a certainty as might have quickened and comforted your own soul, and answered all other Christian purposes. Such a certainty as this any candid person may have, suppose there be any living witness, by talking one hour with that person in the love and fear of God.

Q. But what does it signify, whether any have attained it or no, seeing so many scriptures witness for it?

A. If I were convinced, that none in England had attained what has been so clearly and strongly preached by such a number of preachers, in so many places, and for so long a time; I should be clearly convinced, that we had all mistaken the meaning of those scriptures. And therefore for the time to come, I too should teach, that "sin will remain till death."

I will here beg leave to add a few questions written by a plain man on this important subject.

“ Queries, humbly proposed to those who deny Christian perfection to be attainable in this life.

1. Has not there been a *larger measure* of the Holy Spirit given under the gospel, than under the Jewish dispensation? If not, in what sense was *the Spirit not given* before Christ was glorified? John vii. 39.

2. Was that *glory which followed the sufferings of Christ*, 1 Pet. i. 11. an external glory, or an internal, viz. the glory of holiness?

3. Has God any where in scripture *commanded* us more than he has *promised* to us?

4. Are the promises of God respecting holiness, to be fulfilled *in this life*, or only *in the next*?

5. Is a Christian under any other laws than those which God promises to *write in our hearts*? Jer. xxxi. 31. &c. Heb. viii. 10.

6. In what sense is *the righteousness of the law fulfilled* in those, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit? Rom. viii. 4.

7. Is it impossible for any one in this life to love God *with all his heart, and mind, and soul, and strength*? And is the Christian under any law which is not fulfilled in this love?

8. Does the soul's *going out of the body* effect its purification from indwelling sin?

9. If so, is it not something else, not the blood of Christ, which *cleanseth it from all sin*?

10. If his blood cleanseth us from all sin, while the soul and body are united, is it not *in this life*?

11. If when that union ceases, is it not *in the next*? And is not this too late?

12. If in the article of death; what situation is the soul in, when it is neither *in the body nor out of it*?

13. Did not St. Paul pray according to the will of God, when he prayed that the Thessalonians might be *sanctified wholly, and preserved* (in this world, not the next, unless he was praying for the dead) *blame-*

less in body, soul, and spirit, unto the coming of Jesus Christ?

14. Do you sincerely desire to be freed from indwelling sin in this life?

15. If you do, did not God give you that desire?

16. If so, did he not give it you to mock you, since it is impossible it should ever be fulfilled?

17. If you have not sincerity enough even to desire it, are you not disputing about matters too high for you?

18. Do you ever pray God to cleanse the thoughts of your heart, that you may perfectly love him?

19. If you neither desire what you ask, nor believe it attainable, pray you not as a fool prayeth?

God help thee to consider these questions calmly and impartially!"

In the year 1768 the number of those who believed they were saved from sin, still increasing, I judged it needful to publish, chiefly for their use, "Farther Thoughts on Christian Perfection:" which I will also adjoin.

Q. How is *Christ the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth?* Rom. x. 4.

A. In order to understand this, you must understand what law is here spoken of. And this, I apprehend, is, 1. The Mosaic law, the whole Mosaic dispensation; which St. Paul continually speaks of as one, though containing three parts, the political, moral, and ceremonial: 2. The Adamic law, that given to Adam in innocence, properly called "the law of works." This is in substance the same with the Angelic law, being common to angels and man. It required that man should use to the glory of God, all the powers with which he was created. Now he was created free from any defect, either in his understanding or his affections. His body was then no clog to the mind: it did not hinder his apprehending all things clearly, judging truly concerning them, and reasoning justly; if he reasoned at all.

I say, "if he reasoned;" for possibly he did not. Perhaps he had no need of reasoning, till his corruptible body pressed down the mind, and impaired his native faculties. Perhaps till then, the mind saw every truth that offered, as directly as the eye now sees the light.

Consequently this law, proportioned to his original powers, required that he should always think, always speak, and always act precisely right, in every point whatever. He was well able to do so. And God could not but require the service he was able to pay.

But Adam fell: and his incorruptible body became corruptible: and ever since it is a clog to the soul, and hinders its operations. Hence at present no child of man can at all times apprehend clearly, or judge truly. And where either the judgment or apprehension is wrong, it is impossible to reason justly. Therefore it is as natural for a man to mistake, as to breathe; and he can no more live without the one than without the other. Consequently no man is able to perform the service, which the Adamic law requires.

And no man is obliged to perform it: God does not require it of any man. *For Christ is the end of the Adamic, as well as the Mosaic law.* By his death he put an end to both: he hath abolished both the one and the other, with regard to man; and the obligation to observe either the one or the other is vanished away. Nor is any man living bound to observe the Adamic more than the Mosaic law.

In the room of this Christ hath established another, namely, the law of faith. Not every one that doeth, but every one that believeth, now receiveth righteousness, in the full sense of the word, that is, he is, justified, sanctified, and glorified.

Q. 2. Are we then *dead to the law*?

A. We are *dead to the law by the body of Christ* given for us; Rom. vii. 4. to the Adamic as well as

Mosaic law. We are wholly freed therefrom by his death : that law expiring with him.

Q. 3. How then are we *not without law to God, but under the law to Christ* ? 1 Cor. ix. 21.

A. We are without *that* law. But it does not follow that we are without any law. For God has established another law in its place, even the law of faith. And we are all under this law to God and to Christ. Both our Creator and our Redeemer require us to observe it.

Q. 4. Is love the fulfilling of this law ?

A. Unquestionably it is, The whole law, under which we now are, is fulfilled by love, Rom. xiii. 9. 10. Faith working or animated by love, is all that God now requires of man. He has substituted (not sincerity, but) love, in the room of angelic perfection.

Q. 5. How is *love the end of the commandments* ? 1 Tim. i. 5.

A. It is the end of every commandment of God. It is the point aimed at by the whole, and every part of the Christian institution. The foundation is faith, purifying the heart ; the end love, preserving a good conscience.

Q. 6. What love is this ?

A. *The loving the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength ; and the loving our neighbour, every man as ourselves, as our own souls.*

Q. 7. What are the fruits or properties of this love ?

A. St. Paul informs us at large, Love is long-suffering. It suffers all the weaknesses of the children of God, all the wickedness of the children of the world. And that not for a little time only : but as long as God pleases. In all it sees the hand of God, and willingly submits thereto. Mean time it is *kind*. In all, and after all it suffers, it is soft, mild, tender, benign. *Love envieth not* ; It excludes every kind and degree of envy out of the heart,

Love acteth not rashly, in a violent, headlong manner, nor passes any rash or severe judgment. It *doth not behave itself indecently*, it is not rude, does not act out of character : *seeketh not her own ease*, pleasure, honour, or profit ; *is not provoked* : expels all wrath from the heart : *thinketh no evil* : casteth out all jealousy, suspiciousness, and readiness to believe evil : *rejoiceth not in iniquity*, yea, weeps at the sin or folly of its bitterest enemies : *but rejoiceth in the truth*, in the holiness and happiness of every child of man. *Love covereth all things* : speaks evil of no man : *believeth all things*, that tend to the advantage of another's character. *It hopeth all things* : whatever may extenuate the faults which cannot be denied ; and it *endureth all things*, which God can permit, or men and devils inflict. This is *the law of Christ, the perfect law, the law of liberty*.

And this distinction between the *law of faith* (or love) and *the law of works*, is neither a subtle, nor an unnecessary distinction. It is plain, easy, and intelligible to any common understanding. And it is absolutely necessary, to prevent a thousand doubts and fears, even in those who do *walk in love*.

Q. 8. But do we not in many things offend all, yea the best of us, even against this law ?

A. In one sense we do not, while all our tempers, and thoughts, and words, and works spring from love. But in another we do, and shall do, more or less, as long as we remain in the body. For neither love nor the *unction of the Holy One* makes us infallible. Therefore through unavoidable defect of understanding we cannot but mistake in many things. And these mistakes will frequently occasion something wrong, both in our temper, and words, and actions. From mistaking his character, we may love a person less than he really deserves. And by the same mistake we are unavoidably led to speak or act with regard to that person, in such a manner as is contrary

to this law, in some or other of the preceding instances.

Q. 9. Do we not then need Christ, even on this account?

A. The holiest of men still need Christ as their prophet, as *the Light of the world*. For he does not give them light, but from moment to moment: the instant he withdraws, all is darkness. They still need Christ as their King. For God does not give them a stock of holiness. But unless they receive a supply every moment, nothing but unholiness would remain. They still need Christ as their Priest, to make atonement for their holy things. Even perfect holiness is acceptable to God only through Jesus Christ.

Q. 10. May not then the very best of men adopt the dying martyr's confession, "I am in myself *nothing but sin, darkness, hell*; but thou art my light, my holiness, my heaven?"

A. Not exactly. But the best of men may say, "Thou art my light, my holiness, my heaven. Through my union with thee, I am full of light, of holiness, and happiness. And *if I were left to myself, I should be nothing but sin, darkness, hell.*"

But to proceed. The best of men need Christ as their priest, their atonement, their advocate with the Father; not only, as the continuance of their every blessing depends on his death and intercession, but on account of their coming short of the law of love. For every man living does so. You who *feel all love*, compare yourselves with the preceding description; weigh yourselves in this balance, and see if you are not wanting in many particulars.

Q. 11. But if all this be consistent with Christian perfection, that perfection is not freedom from all sin: seeing *sin is the transgression of the law*. And the perfect in love transgress the very law they are under. Besides they need the atonement of Christ. And he is the atonement for nothing but sin. Is then the term *sinless perfection* proper?

A. I do not approve of the expression. But observe, in what sense the persons in question need the atonement of Christ. They do not need him to reconcile them to God *afresh*; for they are reconciled. They do not need him, to *restore* the favour of God, but to *continue* it. He does not *procure* pardon for them *anew*, but *ever liveth to make intercession for them*. And *by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified*, Heb. x. 14.

For want of duly considering this, some deny that they need the atonement of Christ. Indeed exceedingly few: I do not remember to have found five of them in England. Of the two, I would far sooner give up Christian perfection. But we need not give up either one or the other. The perfection I hold, *Love rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing, and in every thing giving thanks*, is well consistent with it: if any hold a perfection which is not, they must look to it.

Q. 12. Does then Christian perfection imply any more than *sincerity*?

A. Not if you mean by that word, love filling the heart, expelling pride, wrath, evil desire, self-will: rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing, and in every thing giving thanks. But I doubt few use *sincerity* in this sense. Therefore I think the old word is best.

A person may be *sincere*, who has all his natural tempers, pride, wrath, lust, self-will, in some degree. But he is not *perfect in love*, till his heart is cleansed from these, and all its other corruptions.

To clear this point a little farther; I know many that love God with all their heart. He is their one desire, their one delight, and they are continually happy in him. They love their neighbour as themselves. They feel as sincere, fervent, constant a desire for the happiness of every man, good or bad, friend or enemy, as for their own. They rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing

give thanks. Their souls are continually streaming up to God, in holy joy, prayer, and praise. This is a point of fact. And this is plain, sound, scriptural experience.

But even these souls dwell in a shattered body, and are so pressed down thereby, that they cannot always exert themselves as they would, by thinking, speaking, and acting *precisely right*. For want of better bodily organs, they must at times, think, speak, or act wrong; not indeed through a defect of *love*, but through a defect of *knowledge*. And while this is the case, notwithstanding that defect, and its consequences, they fulfil the law of love.

Yet as even in this case there is not a full conformity to the perfect law, so the most perfect in love do on this very account, need the blood of atonement, and may properly for themselves, as well as for their brethren, say, *Forgive us our trespasses*.

Q. 13. But if Christ has put an end to that law, what need of any atonement for their transgressing it?

A. Observe in what sense he has put an end to it, and the difficulty vanishes. Were it not for the *abiding merit* of his death, and his *continual intercession* for us, that law would condemn us still. These therefore we still need, for every transgression of it?

Q. 14. But can one that is saved from sin be tempted?

A. Yes; for *Christ was tempted*.

Q. 15. However, what you call temptation, I call the corruption of my heart. And how will you distinguish one from the other?

A. In some cases it is impossible to distinguish, without the *direct witness* of the Spirit. But in general one may distinguish thus:

One commends me. Here is a temptation to pride; but instantly my soul is humbled before God. And I feel no pride: of which I am as sure as that pride is not humility.

A man strikes me. Here is a temptation to anger. But my heart overflows with love; and I feel no anger at all: of which I am as sure, as that love and anger are not the same.

A woman solicits me. Here is a temptation to lust. But in the instant I shrink back; and I feel no desire or lust at all: of which I can be as sure, as that my hand is cold or hot.

Thus it is, if I am tempted by a *present* object; and it is just the same, if when it is absent, the devil recalls a commendation, an injury, or a woman to my mind. In the instant the soul repels the temptation, and remains filled with pure love.

And the difference is still plainer, when I compare my present state with my past, wherein I felt temptation and corruption too.

Q. 16. But how do you *know* that you are sanctified, saved from your inbred corruption?

A. I can know it no otherwise than I know that I am justified. *Hereby know we that we are of God, in either sense, by the Spirit that he hath given us.*

We know it by *the witness*, and by *the fruit* of the Spirit. And first by *the witness*. As when we were justified, the *Spirit bore witness with our Spirit*, that our sins were forgiven; so when we were sanctified, he bore witness, that they were taken away. Indeed the witness of sanctification is not always clear at first (as neither is that of justification;) neither is it afterwards always the same, but like that of justification, sometimes stronger and sometimes fainter. Yea, and sometimes it is withdrawn. Yet in general, the latter testimony of the Spirit is both as clear and as steady as the former.

Q. 17. But what need is there of it, seeing sanctification is a *real change*, not a *relative* only, like justification?

A. But is the new-birth a *relative* change only? Is not this a *real change*? Therefore if we need no witness of our sanctification, because it is a *real change*,

for the same reason we should need none that we are born of, or are the children of God.

Q. 18. But does not sanctification shine by its own light ?

A. And does not the new-birth too ? Sometimes it does. And so does sanctification : at others it does not. In the hour of temptation Satan clouds the work of God, and injects various doubts and reasonings, especially in those who have either very weak or very strong understandings. At such times there is absolute need of that witness ; without which the work of sanctification, not only could not be discerned, but could no longer subsist. Were it not for this, the soul could not then abide in the love of God : much less could it rejoice evermore, and in every thing give thanks. In these circumstances therefore, a *direct testimony* that we are sanctified, is necessary in the highest degree.

“ But I have no *witness* that I am saved from sin ; and yet I have no doubt of it.” Very well. As long as you have no doubt, it is enough : when you have you will need that *witness*.

Q. 19. But what scripture makes mention of any such thing, or gives any reason to expect it ?

A. That scripture, 1 Cor. ii. 12. “ We have received not the spirit that is of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things which are freely given us of God.”

Now surely sanctification is one of the *things which are freely given us of God*. And no possible reason can be assigned, why this should be excepted, when the apostle says, “ We receive the Spirit *for this very end*, that we may know the things which are *thus freely given us*.”

Is not the same thing implied in that well known scripture, Rom. viii. 16. “ The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.” Does he only witness this to those who are children of God in the lowest sense ? Nay, but to

those also who are such in the highest sense. And does he not witness that they *are such in the highest sense*? What reason have we to doubt it?

What if a man were to affirm (as indeed many do) that this witness belongs *only to the highest* class of Christians? Would you not answer, the apostle makes no restriction? Therefore doubtless it belongs to all the children of God. And will not the same answer hold if any affirm, That it belongs *only to the lowest* class?

Consider likewise, 1 John v. 19. "We know that we are of God." *How?* "By the Spirit that he hath given us," 1 John iii. 24. *Nay,* "hereby we know that he abideth in us." And what ground have we either from scripture or reason, to exclude the witness any more than the fruit of the Spirit from being here intended? By this then also *we know that we are of God*, and *in what sense* we are so. Whether we are babes, young men, or fathers, we know in the same manner.

Not that I affirm, That all young men, or even fathers, have this testimony every moment: there may be intermissions of the direct testimony that they are thus born of God. But those intermissions are fewer and shorter as they grow up in Christ. And some have the testimony both of their justification and sanctification, without any intermission at all: which I presume more might have, did they walk as humbly and closely with God as they may.

Q. 20. May not some of these have a testimony from the Spirit, that they shall not finally fall from God?

A. They may. And this persuasion, that *neither life nor death shall separate them from Him*, far from being hurtful, may in some circumstances be extremely useful. These therefore we should in no wise grieve, but earnestly encourage them, to *hold the beginning of their confidence stedfast to the end*.

Q. 21. But have any a testimony from the Spirit that they shall *never sin*?

A. We know not that they have. Besides, we do not find any general state described in scripture, from which a man cannot draw back to sin. If there were any state wherein this was impossible, it would be that of those who are *sanctified*, who are *Fathers in Christ*, who *rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks*. But it is not impossible for these to draw back. They who are *sanctified*, may yet fall and perish, Heb. x. 29. Even *Fathers in Christ* need that warning, "Love not the world," 1 John ii. 15. They who *rejoice, pray, and give thanks without ceasing*, may nevertheless *quench the Spirit*, 1 Thess. v. 16., &c. Nay, even they who are *sealed unto the day of redemption*, may yet *grieve the Holy Spirit of God*. Eph. iv. 30.

Q. 22. By what *fruit of the Spirit* may we know that we are of God, in the highest sense ?

A. By *love, joy, peace* always abiding ; by *invariable long-suffering*, patience, resignation ; by *gentleness*, triumphing over all provocation ; by *goodness*, mildness, sweetness, tenderness of spirit ; by *fidelity*, simplicity, godly sincerity ; by *meekness*, calmness, evenness, of spirit ; by *temperance*, not only in food and sleep, but in all things natural and spiritual.

Q. 23. But what great matter is there in this ? Have we not all this, when we are justified.

A. What ! *Total resignation* to the will of God, without any mixture of self-will ? *Gentleness*, without any touch of anger, even the moment we are provoked ? *Love* to God, without the least love to the creature, but in and for God, excluding *all* pride ? *Love* to man, excluding *all* envy, *all* jealousy, and rash judging ? *Meekness*, keeping the whole soul inviolably calm ? And *Temperance* in all things ? Deny that any ever came up to this, if you please : but do not say all who are justified, do.

Q. 24. But some who are newly justified do : what then will you say to these ?

A. If they really do, I will say, they are sanctified, saved from sin in that moment ; and that they

never need lose what God has given, or feel sin any more.

But certainly this is an exempt case. It is otherwise with the generality of those that are justified. They feel in themselves, more or less, pride, self-will, and a heart bent to backsliding. And till they have gradually mortified these, they are not fully renewed in love.

Q. 25. But is not this the case of all that are justified? Do they not *gradually* die to sin and grow in grace, till at, or perhaps a little before death, God perfects them in love?

A. I believe this is the case of most, but not all.— God usually gives a considerable *time*, for men to receive *light*, to grow in *grace*, to *do and suffer* his will, before they are either justified or sanctified. But he does not invariably adhere to this. Sometimes he *cuts short his work*. He does the work of many years in a few weeks : perhaps in a week, a day, an hour. He justifies, or sanctifies, both those who have *done* or *suffered* nothing, and who have not had *time* for a gradual growth either in *light* or *grace*. And may he not do what he will with his own? Is thine eye evil, because he is good?

It need not therefore be affirmed over and over, and proved by forty texts of scripture, either that most men are perfected in love *at last*, that there is a *gradual work* of God in the soul : or that, generally speaking, it is a *long time*, even many years, before sin is destroyed. All this we know. But we know likewise, that God *may*, with man's good leave, *cut short his work*, in whatever degree he pleases, and do the usual work of many years in a moment. He does so in many instances. And yet there is a *gradual work* both *before* and *after* that moment. So that one may affirm, the work is *gradual* ; another, it is *instantaneous* : without any manner of contradiction.

Q. 26. Does St. Paul mean any more by being *sealed with the Spirit*, than being *renewed in love*?

A. Perhaps in one place, 2 Cor. i. 22. he does not mean so much. But in another, Eph. i. 13. he seems to include both the fruit and the witness : and that in a higher degree than we experience, even when we are first *renewed in love*. *God sealed us with the Spirit of promise*, by giving us the full assurance of hope ; such a confidence of receiving all the promises of God, as excludes the possibility of doubting ; with that *Holy Spirit*, by universal holiness, stamping the whole image of God on our hearts.

Q. 27. But how can those who are thus *sealed*, grieve the *Holy Spirit of God* ?

A. St. Paul tells you very particularly, 1. By such *conversation* as is not profitable, not to the use of edifying, not apt to minister grace to the hearers ; 2. By relapsing into *bitterness* or want of kindness ; 3. By wrath, lasting displeasure, or want of *tender-heartedness* ; 4. By *anger*, however soon it is over, want of instantly *forgiving one another* ; 5. By *clamour* or brawling, loud, harsh, rough speaking ; 6. By *evil-speaking*, whispering, talebearing ; needlessly mentioning the fault of an absent person, though in ever so soft a manner.

Q. 28. What do you think of those in *London*, who seem to have been lately *renewed in love* ?*

A. There is something very peculiar in the experience of the greater part of them. One would expect, that a believer should first be filled with love, and thereby emptied of sin ; whereas these were emptied of sin first, and then filled with love. Perhaps it pleased God to work in this manner, to make his work more plain and undeniable ; and to distinguish it more clearly from that overflowing love, which is often felt even in a justified state.

It seems likewise most agreeable to that great promise, Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26. *From all your filthiness, will I cleanse you : a new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you.*

* In the year 1763, when between three and four hundred in the society in London, professed to be perfected in love.

But I do not think of them all alike: there is a wide difference between some of them and others. I think most of them with whom I have spoken, have much faith, love, joy, and peace. Some of these, I believe, are renewed in love, and have the *direct witness* of it: and they manifest the fruit above described, in all their words and actions. Now let any man call this what he will. It is what I call *Christian Perfection*.

But some who have much love, peace, and joy, yet have not the direct witness. And others who think they have, are nevertheless manifestly wanting in the fruit. How many I will not say: perhaps one in ten, perhaps more or fewer. But some are indeniably wanting in *long suffering*, Christian resignation. They do not see the hand of God in whatever occurs, and cheerfully embrace it. They do not in every thing give thanks, and rejoice evermore. They are not happy: at least, not *always* happy. For sometimes they *complain*. They say; "This or that is *hard*!"

Some are wanting in *gentleness*. They *resist evil*, instead of turning the other cheek. They do not receive reproach with gentleness; no, nor even reproof. Nay, they are not able to bear contradiction, without the appearance, at least, of resentment. If they are reproved, or contradicted, though mildly, they do not take it well. They behave with more distance and reserve than they did before. If they are reproved or contradicted harshly, they answer it with harshness; with a loud voice, or with an angry tone, or in a sharp or surly manner. They speak sharply, or roughly, when they reprove others, and behave roughly to their inferiors.

Some are wanting in *goodness*. They are not kind, mild, sweet, amiable, soft, and loving at all times, in their spirit, in their words, in their looks and air, in the whole tenor of their behaviour; and that to all, high and low, rich and poor, without

respect of persons : particularly to them that are out of the way, to opposers, and those of their own household. They do not long, study, endeavour by every means, to make all about them happy. They can see them uneasy, and not be concerned : perhaps they make them so. And then wipe their mouths and say, " Why, they deserve it. It is their own fault."

Some are wanting in *fidelity*, a nice regard to truth, simplicity, and godly sincerity. Their love is hardly *without dissimulation* ; something like guile is found in their mouth. They are smooth to an excess, so as scarce to avoid a degree of fawning, or of seeming to mean what they do not.

Some are wanting in *meekness*, quietness, of spirit, composure, evenness of temper. They are up and down, sometimes high, sometimes low ; their mind is not well balanced. Their affections are either not in due proportion ; they have too much of one, too little of another : or they are not duly mixed and tempered together. So as to counterpoise each other. Hence there is often a jar. Their soul is out of tune, and cannot make the true harmony.

Some are wanting in *temperance*. They do not steadily use that kind and degree of food, which they know, or might know, would most conduce to the health, strength, and vigour of the body. Or they are not temperate in sleep : they do not rigorously adhere to what is best both for body and mind. Otherwise they would constantly go to bed and rise early, and at a fixed hour. Or they sup late, which is neither good for body nor soul. Or they use neither fasting nor abstinence. Or they prefer (which are so many sorts of intemperance) that preaching, reading, or conversation, which gives them a transient joy and comfort, before that which brings godly sorrow, or *instruction in righteousness*. Such joy is not sanctified. It doth not tend to and terminate in the crucifixion of the heart. Such faith doth not centre in God, but rather in itself.

So far all is plain. I believe you have faith, and love, and joy, and peace. You who are particularly concerned, know each for yourself, that you are wanting in the respect above mentioned. You are wanting either in long-suffering, gentleness, or goodness; either in fidelity, meekness, or temperance. Let us not then, on either hand, fight about words. In the thing we clearly agree.

You have not what I call Christian perfection. — However, hold fast what you have, and earnestly pray for what you have not.

Q. 29. Can those who are perfect in love, grow in grace?

A. Undoubtedly they can: And that not only while they are in the body, but probably to all eternity.

Q. 30. Can they fall from it?

A. I am well assured they can. Matter of fact puts this beyond dispute. Formerly we thought, one saved from sin, could not fall. Now, we know the contrary. Neither does any one stand, by virtue of any thing that is implied in the nature of the state. There is no such *height or strength* of holiness as it is impossible to fall from. If there be any that *cannot fall*, this wholly depends on the promise and faithfulness of God.

Q. 31. Can those who fall from this state, recover it?

A. Why not? We have instances of this also. Nay, it is an exceeding common thing, for persons to lose it more than once, before they are established therein.

It is therefore to guard them who are saved from sin, from every occasion of stumbling, that I give the following advices.

Q. 32. What is the first advice that you would give them.

A. Watch and pray continually against pride. If God has cast it out, see that it enter no more: it is full as dangerous as evil desire; and you may

slide back into it unawares : especially if you think there is no danger of it. "Nay, but I ascribe all I have to God." So you may, and be proud nevertheless. For it is pride, not only to ascribe any thing we have to ourselves, but to think we have what we really have not. You ascribe all the knowledge you have to God ; and in this respect you are humble. But if you think you have more than you really have ; or if you think you are so taught of God, as no longer to need man's teaching, pride lieth at the door.

Do not therefore say to any who would advise or reprove you, "You are blind : you cannot teach me." Do not say, This is your *wisdom*, your *carnal reason* : but calmly weigh the thing before God.

Always remember, much grace does not imply much light. These do not always go together.—As there may be much light where there is little love, so there may be much love where there is little light. The *heart* has more heat than the *eye* ; yet it cannot see. And God has wisely tempered the members of the body together, that none may say to another, "I have no need of thee."

To imagine none can teach you, but those who are themselves saved from sin, is a very great and dangerous mistake. Give not place to it for a moment. It will lead you into a thousand other mistakes, and that irrecoverably. No : *Dominion* is not *founded in grace*, as the madmen of the last age talked. Obey and regard *them that are over you in the Lord*, and do not think you know better than they. Know their place and *your own* : always remembering, Much love does not imply much light.

The not observing this has led some into many mistakes, and into the appearance, at least, of pride. O beware of the appearance and the thing. Let there be in you that lowly mind which was in Jesus Christ. And be ye likewise clothed with humility.—Let it not only fill, but cover you all over. Let mo-

desty, and self-diffidence appear in all your words and actions. Let all you speak and do, shew that you are little, and base, and mean, and vile in your own eyes.

As one instance in this, be always ready to own any fault you have been in. If you have at any time thought, spoke, or acted wrong, be not backward to acknowledge it. Never dream that this will hurt the cause of God: no, it will further it. Be therefore open and frank when you are taxed with any thing: do not seek either to evade or disguise it. But let it appear just as it is, and you will thereby not hinder, but adorn the gospel.

Q. 33. What is the second advice which you would give them?

A. Beware of that daughter of pride, *enthusiasm*! keep at the utmost distance from it: give no place to a heated imagination. Do not hastily ascribe things to God. Do not easily suppose dreams, voices, impressions, visions, or revelations to be from God. They may be from him: they may be from nature: they may be from the devil. Therefore *believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God*. Try all things by the written word, and let all bow down before it. You are in danger of enthusiasm every hour, if you depart ever so little from scripture: yea, or from the plain, literal meaning of any text, taken in connection with the context. And so you are, if you despise, or lightly esteem reason, knowledge, or human learning: every one, of which is an excellent gift of God and may serve the noblest purposes.

I advise you never to use the word's *wisdom, reason, or knowledge*, by way of reproach. On the contrary, pray that you yourself may abound in them more and more. If you mean *worldly wisdom, useless knowledge, false reasoning*, say so: and throw away the chaff but not the wheat.

One general inlet to enthusiasm is, expecting the

end without the means ; the expecting knowledge, for instance, without searching the scripture, and consulting the children of God : the expecting spiritual strength without constant prayer, and steady watchfulness : the expecting any blessing without hearing the word of God at every opportunity.

Some have been ignorant of this device of Satan. They have left off searching the scriptures. They said, "God writes all the scripture on my heart ; therefore I have no need to read it." Others thought they had not so much need of hearing, and so grew slack in attending preaching. O take warning you who are concerned herein. You have listened to the voice of a stranger. Fly back to Christ, and keep in the good old way, which was *once delivered to the saints.*

The very desire of *growing in grace*, may sometimes be an inlet of enthusiasm. As it continually leads us to seek *new grace*, it may lead us unawares, to seek something else new, beside *new degrees* of love to God and man. So it has led some to fancy they had received gifts of a *new kind*, after a new heart, as 1. The loving God with all our mind ; 2. with all our soul ; 3. with all our strength ; 4. oneness with God ; 5. oneness with Christ ; 6. having our lives hid with Christ in God ; 7. being dead with Christ ; 8. rising with him ; 9. the sitting with him in heavenly places ; 10. the being taken up into his throne ; 11. the being in the New Jerusalem ; 12. the seeing the tabernacle of God come down among men ; 13. the being dead to all works ; 14. the not being liable to death, pain, grief, or temptation.

One ground of many of these mistakes is, the taking every fresh, strong application of any of these scriptures to the heart, to be a gift of a *new kind* : not knowing that several of these scriptures are not fulfilled yet ; that most of the others are fulfilled when we are justified ; the rest the moment we are

sanctified. It remains only, to experience them in *higher degrees* : this is all we have to expect.

Another ground of these and a thousand mistakes is, the not considering deeply, that love is the highest gift of God, humble, gentle, patient love : that all visions, revelations, manifestations whatever, are little things compared to love ; and that all the gifts above mentioned are the same with, or infinitely inferior to it.

It were well you should be thoroughly sensible of this : The heaven of heavens is love. There is nothing higher in religion : there is, in effect, nothing else : if you look for any thing but *more love*, you are looking wide of the mark, you are getting out of the royal way. And when you are asking others, have *you* received this or that blessing ? If you mean any thing but *more love*, you are wrong : you are leading them out of the way, and putting them upon a false scent. Settle it then in your heart, that from the moment God has saved you from sin, you are to aim at nothing more, but more of that love described in the thirteenth of the first epistle to the *Corinthians*. You can go no higher than this, till you are carried into Abraham's bosom.

I say again, beware of *enthusiasm*. Such is, the imagining you have the gift of *prophesying*, or of *discerning of spirits*, which I do not believe one of you has ; no, nor ever had yet. Beware of judging people to be either right or wrong, by your own *feelings*. This is no scriptural way of judging. O keep close to the law, and to the testimony !

Q. 34. What is the third ?

A. Beware of *Antinomianism*, making void the law, or any part of it, through *faith*. Enthusiasm naturally leads to this ; indeed they scarce can be separated. This may steal upon you in a thousand forms, so that you cannot be too watchful against it. Take heed of every thing, whether in principle or practice, which has any tendency thereto. Even that

great truth, that Christ is *the end of the law*, may betray us into it, if we do not consider that he has adopted every point of the moral law, and grafted it into the law of love. Beware of thinking, "because I am filled with love, I need not have *so much* holiness : because I pray always, therefore I need no *set time* for private prayer : because I watch always, therefore I need no particular self examination." Let us *magnify the law*, the whole written word, and *make it honourable*. Let this be our voice, *I prize thy commandments, above gold or precious stones. O what love have I unto thy law. All the day long is my study in it !* Beware of *Antinomian books*. They contain many excellent things ; and this makes them the more dangerous. O be warned in time ! Do not play with fire ; do not put your hand on the hole of a cockatrice-den ! I intreat you, beware of *bigotry*. Let not your love or beneficence be confined to *Methodists* (so called) only ; much less to that very small part of them, who seem to be renewed in love : or to those who believe yours and their report : O make not this your *Shibboleth !* Beware of *stillness* : *ceasing* in a wrong sense, *from your own works*. To mention one instance out of many : " You have received, says one, a great blessing : but you began to *talk* of it, and to *do* this and that : so you lost it. You should have been *still*."

Beware of *self-indulgence* : yea, and making a virtue, of it, laughing at *self-denial* and *taking up the cross daily*, at fasting or abstinence. Beware of *censoriousness*, thinking or calling them that any ways oppose you, whether in judgment or practice, *blind, dead, fallen*, or " enemies to the work." Once more, beware of *Solifidianism* ; crying nothing but " believe, believe : " and condemning those as *ignorant or legal*, who speak in a more spiritual way. At certain seasons indeed, it may be right to treat of nothing but repentance, or merely of faith, or altogether of holiness : but in general our call is, to declare

the whole counsel of God, and to prophecy according to the analogy of faith. The written word treats of the whole, and every particular branch of righteousness, descending to its minutest branches, as to be sober, courteous, diligent, patient, to honour all men. So likewise the Holy Spirit works the same in our hearts, not merely creating desires after holiness in general, but strongly inclining us to every particular grace, leading us to every individual part of *whatsoever is lovely*. And this with the greatest propriety; for as *by works faith is made perfect*, so the completing or destroying the work of faith, and enjoying the favour, or suffering the displeasure of God, greatly depends on every single act of obedience or disobedience.

Q. 35. What is the fourth ?

A. Beware of *sins of omission* : lose no opportunity of doing good in any kind. Be zealous of good works. Willingly omit no work, either of pity or mercy. Do all the good you possibly can to the bodies and souls of men ; particularly, *thou shalt in any wise reprove thy neighbour and not suffer sin upon him*. Be *active*. Give no place to indolence or sloth : give no occasion to say, "Ye are idle, ye are idle."—Many will say so still ; but let your whole behaviour refute the slander. Be always employed ; lose no shred of time ; gather up the fragments, that none be lost ; and whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might. Be *slow to speak*, and wary in speaking. *In a multitude of words there wanteth not sin*. Do not talk much, neither long at a time. Few can converse profitably above an hour. Keep at the utmost distance from pious chit-chat, from religious gossiping.

Q. 36. What is the fifth ?

A. Beware of *desiring* any thing but God. Now you desire nothing else. Every other desire is driven out ; see that none enter again. *Keep thyself pure, let your eye remain single, and your whole body*

shall be full of light. Admit no desire of pleasing food, or any other pleasure of sense; no desire of pleasing the eye, or the imagination, by any thing grand, or new, or beautiful: no desire of money, of praise, or esteem: of happiness in *any creature*. You *may* bring these desires back; but you need not: you need feel them no more. O stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free.

Be patterns to all, of denying yourselves, and taking up your cross daily. Let them see that you make no account of any pleasure which does not bring you nearer to God; nor regard any pain which does: that you simply aim at pleasing him, whether by doing or suffering: that the constant language of your heart, with regard to pleasure or pain, honour or dishonour, riches or poverty, is,

All's alike to me, so I

In my Lord may live and die!

Q. What is the sixth?

A. Beware of *schism*; of making a rent in the church of Christ. That inward disunion, the members ceasing to have reciprocal love *one for another* (1 Cor. xii. 25.) is the very root of all contention, and every outward separation. Beware of every thing tending thereto. Beware of a dividing spirit: shun whatever has the least aspect that way. Therefore say not, *I am of Paul, or of Apollos*; the very thing which occasioned the schism at Corinth. Say not, this is *my* preacher; the *best* preacher in England; give me him, and take all the rest. All this tends to breed or foment division, to disunite those whom God hath joined. Do not run down any preacher. Do not exalt any one above the rest, lest you hurt both him and the cause of God. On the other hand, do not bear hard upon any by reason of some incoherency or inaccuracy of expression; no, nor for some mistakes, were they really such.

Likewise if you would avoid schism, observe every rule of the *society*, and of the *bands*, for conscience'

sake. Never omit meeting your class or band; never absent yourself from any public meeting: these are the very sinews of our society; and whatever weakens, or tends to weaken our regard for these, or our exactness in attending them, strikes at the very root of our community. As one saith, "That part of our economy, the private weekly meetings for prayer, examination, and particular exhortation, has been the greatest means of deepening and confirming every blessing, that was received by the word preached, and of diffusing it to others who could not attend the public ministry—whereas, without this religious connection and intercourse, the most ardent attempts by mere preaching, have proved of little lasting use."

Suffer not one thought of separating from your brethren, whether their opinions agree with yours or not. Do not dream that any man sins, in not believing *you*, in not taking *your word*; or that this or that *opinion* is essential to the work, and both must stand or fall together. Beware of *impatience of contradiction*. Do not condemn or think hardly of those who cannot see just as you see, or who judge it their duty to contradict you, whether in a great thing or a small. I fear some of us have thought hardly of others, merely because they contradicted what we affirmed. All this tends to division; and by every thing of this kind, we are teaching them an evil lesson against ourselves.

O beware of touchiness, of testiness, not bearing to be spoken to; starting at the least word; and flying from those who do not implicitly receive mine or another's sayings!

Expect contradiction and opposition, together with crosses of various kinds. Consider the words of St. Paul, *To you it is given in the behalf of Christ, for his sake, as a fruit of his death and intercession for you, not only to believe, but also to suffer for his sake, Phil. i. 29. It is given!* God gives you this opposition or

reproach it is a fresh token of his love. And will you disown the Giver? Or spurn his gift, and count it a misfortune? Will you not rather say, "Father, the hour is come, that thou shouldest be glorified. Now thou givest thy child, to suffer something for thee. Do with me according to thy will." Know that these things, far from being hinderances to the work of God, or to your soul, unless by your own fault, are not only unavoidable in the course of Providence, but profitable, yea, necessary for you.— Therefore receive them from God (not from chance) with willingness, with thankfulness. Receive them from men with humility, meekness, yieldingness, gentleness, sweetness. Why should not even your outward *appearance* and *manner*, be soft? Remember the character of Lady Cutts: "It was said of the Roman emperor, Titus, 'never any one *came displeased from him*;' but it might be said of her never any one *went displeased to her*. So secure were all, of the kind and favourable reception, which they would meet with from her."

Beware of tempting others to separate from *you*. Give no offence which can possibly be avoided: see that your practice be in all things suitable to your profession, adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour. Be particularly careful in speaking of yourself: you may not indeed deny the work of God; but speak of it, when you are called thereto, in the most inoffensive manner possible. Avoid all magnificent, pompous words. Indeed you need give it no *general* name: Neither "perfection, sanctification, the second blessing, nor the having attained." Rather speak of the *particulars*, which God has wrought for you. You may say, "At such a time I felt a change which I am not able to express. And since that time I have not felt pride, or self-will, or wrath, or unbelief: nor any thing but a fulness of love to God and to all mankind." And answer any other plain question that is asked, with modesty and simplicity.

And if any of you should at any time fall from what you now are, if you should again feel pride or unbelief, or any temper from which you are now delivered: do not deny, do not hide, do not disguise it at all, at the peril of your soul. At all events go to one in whom you can confide, and speak just what you feel. God will enable him to speak a word in season, which shall be health to your soul. And surely the Lord will again lift up your head, and cause the bones that have been broken to rejoice.

Q. 38. What is the last advice that you would give them?

A. Be *exemplary* in all things: particularly in *outward* things (as in *dress*;) in *little* things, in the laying out of your *money* (avoiding every needless expence;) in deep, steady *seriousness*, and in the *solidity* and *usefulness* of all your *conversation*. So shall you be *lights shining in a dark place*: So shall you daily grow in *grace*, till an *entrance* be ministered unto you abundantly, into the *everlasting kingdom* of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Most of the preceding advices are strongly enforced in the following reflections: which I recommend to your deep and frequent consideration, next to the holy scriptures.

1. The sea is an excellent figure of the fulness of God and that of the blessed Spirit. For as the rivers all return into the sea; so the bodies, the souls, and the good works of the righteous, return into God, to live there in his eternal repose.

Although all the graces of God depend on his mere bounty, yet is he pleased generally to attach them to the prayers, the instructions, and the holiness of those with whom we are. By strong, though invisible attractions, he draws some souls through their intercourse with others.

The sympathies formed by grace far surpass those formed by nature.

The truly devout, shew that passions as naturally flow from true as from false Love, so deeply sensible

are they of the goods and evils of those whom they love for God's sake. But this can only be comprehended by those who understand the language of love.

The bottom of the soul may be in repose, even while we are in many outward troubles ; just as the bottom of the sea is calm, while the surface is strongly agitated.

2. The *best helps to growth in grace*, are the ill usage, the affronts, and the losses which befall us. We should receive them with all thankfulness, as preferable to all others, were it only on this account, that our will has no part therein.

The readiest way to escape from our sufferings is, to be willing they should endure as long as God pleases.

If we suffer persecution and affliction in a right manner, we attain a larger measure of conformity to Christ by a due improvement of one of these occasions, than we could have done merely by imitating his mercy, in abundance of good works.

One of the greatest evidences of God's love to those that love him, is to send them afflictions with grace to bear them.

Even in great afflictions, we ought to testify to God, that in receiving them from his hand, we feel pleasure in the midst of the pain, from being afflicted by him who loves us, and whom we love.

The readiest way which God takes to draw a man to himself, is to afflict him in that he loves most and with good reason ; and to cause this affliction to arise from some good action done with a single eye : because nothing can more clearly shew him the emptiness of what is most lovely and desirable in the world.

3. True *resignation* consists in a thorough conformity to the whole will of God ; who wills and does all (excepting sin) which comes to pass in the world. In order to this we have only to embrace all events, good and bad, as his will.

In the greatest afflictions which can befall the just, either from heaven or earth, they remain immovable in peace, and perfectly submissive to God, by an inward, loving regard to him, uniting in one all the powers of their souls.

We ought quietly to suffer whatever befalls us, to bear the defects of others and our own, to confess them to God in secret prayer, or with groans which cannot be uttered: but never to speak a sharp or peevish word, nor to murmur or repine.

Be thoroughly willing, that God should treat you in the manner that pleases him. We are his lambs, and therefore ought to be ready to suffer, even to the death, without complaining.

We are to bear with those we cannot amend, and to be content with offering them to God. This is true resignation. And since he has borne our infirmities, we may well bear those of each other for his sake.

To abandon all, to strip one's self of all, in order to seek and to follow Jesus Christ, naked to Bethlehem, where he was born; naked to the hall, where he was scourged: and naked to Calvary, where he died on the cross, is so great a mercy, that neither the thing, nor the knowledge of it is given to any, but through faith in the Son of God.

4. There is no love of God without patience, and no patience without *lowliness* and sweetness of spirit.

Humility and patience are the surest proof of the increase of love.

Humility alone unites patience with love, without which it is impossible to draw profit from suffering; or indeed to avoid complaint, especially when we think we have given no occasion for what men make us suffer.

True humility is a kind of self annihilation: and this is the centre of all virtues.

A soul returned to God, ought to be attentive to every thing which is said to him, on the head of salvation, with a desire to profit thereby.

5. The bearing with men, and suffering evils in *meekness* and silence, is a grand part of a Christian life.

God is the first object of our love : its next office is, to bear the defects of others. And we should begin the practice of this amidst our own household.

We should particularly exercise our love towards them who most shock either our way of thinking, or our temper, or our knowledge, or the desire we have that others should be as virtuous as we wish to be ourselves.

6. On every occasion of uneasiness, we should retire to prayer, that we may give place to the grace and light of God : and then form our resolutions, without being in any pain about what success they may have.

God's command to *pray without ceasing*, is founded on the necessity we have of his grace to preserve the life of God in the soul, which can no more subsist one moment without it, than the body can without air.

Prayer continues in the desire of the heart, though the understanding be employed on outward things.

In souls filled with love, the desire to please God is a continual prayer.

As the furious hate which the devil bears us, is termed the roaring of the lion, so our vehement love may be termed, crying after God.

7. It is scarce conceivable how *strait the way* is, wherein God leads them that follow him ; and how dependent on him we must be, unless we are wanting in our faithfulness to him.

It is hardly credible of how great consequence before God, the smallest things are : and what great inconveniencies sometimes follow those which appear to be light faults.

As a very little dust will disorder a clock, and the least sand will obscure our sight, so the least grain of sin, which is upon the heart, will hinder its right motion towards God.

We ought to be in the church as the saints are in heaven, and in the house as the holiest men are in the church: doing our work in the house as we pray in the church, worshipping God from the ground of the heart.

We should be continually labouring to cut off all the useless things that surround us. And God usually retrenches the superfluities of our souls, in the same proportion as we do those of our bodies.

The best means of resisting the devil is, to destroy whatever of the world remains in us; in order to raise for God upon its ruins, a building all of love. Then shall we begin in this fleeting life, to love God as we shall love him in eternity.

We scarce conceive how easy it is to rob God of his due, in our friendship with the most virtuous persons, until they are torn from us by death. But if this loss produces lasting sorrow, that is a clear proof that we had before two treasures, between which we divided our heart.

8. If after having renounced all, we do not *watch* incessantly, and beseech God to accompany our vigilance with his, we shall be again entangled and overcome.

As the most dangerous winds may enter at little openings, so the devil never enters more dangerously, than by little, unobserved incidents, which seem to be nothing, yet insensibly open the heart to great temptations.

It is good to *examine closely* the state of our souls, as if we had never done it before. For nothing tends more to the full assurance of faith, than to keep ourselves by this means in humility, and the exercise of all good works.

To continual watchfulness and prayer, ought to be added continual employment. For grace flies a vacuum as well as nature, and the devil fills whatever God does not fill.

There is no faithfulness like that which ought to be between a guide of souls, and the person direct-

ed by him. They ought continually to regard each other in God, and closely to examine themselves, whether all their thoughts are pure, and all their works directed with Christian discretion. Other affairs are only the things of men, but these are peculiarly the things of God.

9. The words of St. Paul, "No man can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost," shew us the necessity of eyeing God in our *good works*, and even in our minutest thoughts, knowing that none are pleasing to him but those which he forms in us and with us. From hence we learn that we cannot serve him, unless he use our tongue, hands, and heart, to do by his Spirit whatever he would have us do.

If we were not utterly impotent, our good works would be our own property : whereas now they belong wholly to God, because they proceed from him and his grace ; while raising our works, and making them all divine, he honours himself in us through them.

One of the principal rules of religion is, To lose no occasion of serving God. And since he is invisible to our eyes, we are to serve him in our neighbour ; which he receives as if done to himself in person, standing visibly before us.

God does not love men that are inconstant. Nothing is pleasing to him but what has a resemblance of his own immutability.

A constant attention to the work which God entrusts us with, is a mark of solid piety.

Love fasts when it can, and as much as it can, consistently with health. It leads to all the ordinances of God, and employs itself in all the outward works, whereof it is capable. It flies as it were, like Elijah, over the plain, to find God upon his holy mountain.

God is so great, that he communicates greatness to the least thing that is done for his service.

Happy are they who are sick ; yea, or lose their life for having done a good work.

God frequently conceals the part which his children have in the conversion of other souls. Yet one may boldly say, that person who long groans before him for the conversion of another, whenever that soul is converted to God, is one of the chief causes of it.

Charity cannot be practised right, unless, first, we exercise it the moment God gives the occasion ; and then offer it to God by humble thanksgiving. And this for three reasons ; 1st. To render to him what we have received from him ; 2dly. To avoid the dangerous temptation which springs from the very goodness of these works ; and, 3dly. To unite ourselves to God, in whom the soul expands itself in prayer, with all the graces we have received, and the good works we have done, to draw from him new strength against the bad effects which these very works may produce in us, if we do not make use of the antidotes which God has ordained against them. The true means to be filled anew with the riches of grace, is thus to strip ourselves of it : and without this, it is extremely difficult not to grow faint in the practice of good works.

Good works do not receive their last perfection till they, as it were, lose themselves in God. This is a kind of death to them, resembling that of our bodies, which will not attain their highest life, their immortality, till they lose themselves in the glory of our souls, or rather of God, wherewith they shall be filled. And it is only what they had of earthly and mortal, which good works lose by this spiritual death.

Fire is the symbol of love ; and the love of God is the principle, and the end of all our good works : but as truth surpasses figure, the fire of divine love has this advantage over material fire, that it can re-ascend to its source, and raise thither with it all the good works which it produces ; and by this means it pre-

vents their being corrupted by pride, vanity, or any evil mixture. But this cannot be done otherwise than by making these good works in a spiritual manner die in God, by a deep gratitude, which plunges the soul in him as in an abyss, with all that it is, and all the grace and works for which it is indebted to him : a gratitude, whereby the soul seems to empty itself of them, that they may return to their source, as rivers seem willing to empty themselves, when they pour themselves with all their waters into the sea.

When we have received any favour from God, we ought to retire, if not into our closets, into our hearts, and say, "I come, Lord, to restore to thee what thou hast given, and I freely relinquish it, to enter again into my own nothingness. For what is the most perfect creature in heaven or earth in thy presence, but a void capable of being filled with thee and by thee, as the air which is void and dark is capable of being filled with the light of the sun ? Grant therefore, O Lord, that I may never appropriate thy grace to myself, any more than the air appropriates to itself the light of the sun, which withdraws it every day to restore it the next, there being nothing in the air that either appropriates its light, or resists it. O give me the same facility of receiving and restoring thy grace and good works ! I say thine : for I acknowledge the root from which they spring, is in thee, and not in me."

In the year 1764, upon a review of the whole subject, I wrote down the sum of what I had observed, in the following short propositions :

"1. There is such a thing as *Christian perfection*, for it is again and again mentioned in scripture.

2. It is not so early as justification : for justified persons, are to "go on to perfection." Heb. vi. 1.

3. It is not so late as death ; for St. Paul speaks of living men that were perfect. Phil. iii. 15.

4. It is not *absolute*. Absolute perfection belongs not to man, nor to angels : but to God alone.

5. It does not make a man *infallible* ; none is infallible while he remains in the body.

6. It is *perfect love*, 1 John, iv. 18. This is the *essence* of it : its *properties*, or inseparable fruits, are *rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing, and in every thing giving thanks.* 1 Thess. v. 16, &c.

7. It is *improvable*. It is so far from lying in an indivisible point, from being incapable of increase, that one perfected in love, may grow in grace far swifter than he did before.

8. It is *amissible*, capable of being lost ; of which we have had instances. But we were not thoroughly convinced of this for several years.

9. It is constantly both preceded and followed by a *gradual work*.

10. But is it in itself instantaneous, or not ? In examining this, let us go on step by step.

An *instantaneous change* has been wrought in some believers : none can deny this, who are acquainted with experimental religion.

Since that change, they enjoy *perfect love*. They feel this, and this alone : they rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks. Now this is all that I mean by Christian perfection : therefore these are witnesses of the perfection which I preach.

“ But in some this change was not instantaneous ; ” they did not perceive the instant when it was wrought. It is often difficult to perceive the instant when a man dies, yet there is an instant in which life ceases ; and if ever sin ceases, there must be a last moment of its existence, and a first moment of our deliverance from it.

“ But if they have this love now, they will lose it.” They may, but they need not. And whether they do or no, they have it now, they now experience what we teach ; they now are *all love* ; they *now* rejoice, pray, and praise without ceasing.

“ However, sin is only *suspended* in them, it is

not destroyed." Call it which you please. They are all love to-day, and they take no thought for to-morrow.

"But this doctrine has been much abused." So has that of justification by faith. But that is no reason for giving up either this or any other scriptural doctrine. When you wash your child, as one speaks, 'throw away the water, but do not throw away the child.'

"But those who think they are saved from sin, say they have no need of the merits of Christ."—The say just the contrary. Their language is.

Every moment, Lord, I want

The merit of thy death !

They never before had so deep, so unspeakable a conviction of the need of Christ in all his offices, as they have now.

Therefore all our preachers should make a point of *preaching Christian perfection* to believers, constantly, strongly and explicitly.

And all believers should *mind this one thing*, and continually agonize for it.

I have now done what I proposed. I have given a plain and simple account of the doctrine of Christian perfection. I have declared the whole, and every part of what I mean by that scriptural expression. I have drawn the picture of it at full length, without either disguise or covering. And remember, this is the doctrine of Jesus Christ. Those are his words, not mine : Εσισθε ὁμιῶν τέλειοι, ὥσπερ ὁ πατήρ ὁμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς τέλειός ἐστι. *Ye shall therefore be perfect, as your Father who is in heaven is perfect.* And who says ye shall not ? Or at least, not till your soul is separated from the body ? It is the doctrine of St. Paul, the doctrine of St. James, of St. Peter, and St. John. It is the doctrine of every one who preaches the pure and the whole gospel. Look at it again ; survey it on every side, and that with the closest attention : in one view it is purity of intention, dedi-

eating all the life to God. It is the giving God all our heart : it is one desire and design ruling all our tempers. It is the devoting, not a part, but all our soul, body, and substance to God. In another view, it is all the mind which was in Christ, enabling us to walk as Christ walked. It is the circumcision of the heart from all filthiness, all inward, as well as outward pollution. It is a renewal of the heart in the whole image of God, the full likeness of him that created it. In yet another, it is the loving God with all our heart, and our neighbour as ourselves.

Now, let this *Christian perfection* appear in its native form, and who can speak one word against it ? Will any dare to speak against loving the Lord our God with all our heart, and our neighbour as ourselves ? Against a renewal of heart, not only in part, but in the whole image of God ? Who is he that will open his mouth against being cleansed from all pollution, both of flesh and spirit ? Or against having all the mind that was in Christ, and walking in all things as Christ walked ? What man, who calls himself a Christian, has the hardiness to object, to the devoting, not a part, but all our soul, body, and substance to God ? What serious man would oppose the giving God all our heart, and the having one desire ruling all our tempers ? I say again, let this Christian perfection appear in its own shape, and who will fight against it ? It must be *disguised* before it can be *opposed*. It must be *covered* with a bear-skin first, or even the wild beasts of the people will scarce be induced to *worry* it. But whatever these do, let not the children of God any longer fight against the image of God. Let not the members of Christ say any thing against having the whole mind that was in Christ. Let not those who are alive to God, oppose the dedicating all our life to him. Why should *you*, who have his love shed abroad in your heart, withstand the giving him all your heart ? Does not all that is within you cry out, "O who that loves, can

love enough?" What pity that those who desire and design to please him, should have any other design or desire! Much more that they should dread, as a fatal delusion, yea, abhor, as an abomination to God, the having this one desire and design, ruling every temper! Why should *devout* men be afraid of devoting all their soul, body, and substance to God? Why should those who love Christ, count it a damnable error, to think we may have all the mind that was in him? We allow, we contend, that we are *justified freely*, through the righteousness and the blood of Christ. And why are you so hot against us, because we expect likewise, to be *sanctified wholly* through his Spirit? We look for no favour either from the open servants of sin, or from those who have only the form of religion. But how long will you, who worship God in spirit, who are *circumcised with the circumcision not made with hands*, set your battle in array against those who seek an entire *circumcision of heart*, who thirst to be cleansed *from all filthiness of flesh and spirit*, and to *perfect holiness in the fear of God*? Are we your enemies, because we look for a full deliverance from that *carnal mind, which is enmity against God*? Nay, we are your brethren, your fellow-labourers in the vineyard of our Lord, your companions in the kingdom and patience of Jesus. Although this we confess (if we are fools therein, yet as fools bear with us :) we do expect to love God with all our heart, and our neighbour as ourselves. Yea, we do believe, that he will in this world so "cleanse the thoughts of our hearts, by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit, that we shall perfectly love him, and worthily magnify his holy name."

SECTION VI.

SACRAMENTAL SERVICES, &c.

The Order for the Administration of the
LORD'S SUPPER.

The Elder shall say one or more of these Sentences.

LET your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. Matth. v. 16.

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust do corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. Matth. vi. 19, 20.

Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do unto them; for this is the law and the prophets. Matth. vii. 12.

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. Matth. vii. 21.

Zaccheus stood forth, and said unto the Lord, Behold Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor: and if I have done any wrong to any man, I restore him fourfold. Luke xix. 8.

He that soweth little, shall reap little: and he that soweth plenteously, shall reap plenteously. Let every man do according as he is disposed in his heart; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. 2 Cor. ix. 6, 7.

While we have time, let us do good unto all men, and especially unto them that are of the household of faith. Gal. vi. 10.

Godliness with contentment is great gain: for we brought nothing into the world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. 1 Tim. vi. 6, 7.

Charge them who are rich in this world, that they be ready to give, and glad to distribute, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may attain eternal life. 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18, 19.

God is not unrighteous, that he will forget your works and labour that proceedeth of love ; which love ye have shewed for his Name's sake, who have ministered unto the saints, and yet do minister. Heb. vi. 10.

To do good, and to distribute, forget not ; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. Heb. xiii. 16.

Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him ? 1 John iii. 17.

He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord ; and look what he layeth out, it shall be paid him again. Prov. xix. 17.

Blessed is the man that provideth for the sick and needy : the Lord shall deliver him in the time of trouble. Psal. xli. 1.

[While these Sentences are in reading, some fit person, appointed for that purpose, shall receive the alms for the poor, and other devotions of the people, in a decent bason, to be provided for that purpose : and then bring it to the Elder, who shall place it upon the Table.]

After which the Elder shall say,

YE that do truly and earnestly repent of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbours, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in his holy ways ; draw near with faith, and take this holy Sacrament to your comfort ; and make your humble confession to Almighty God, meekly kneeling upon your knees.

Then shall this general Confession be made by the Minister in the Name of all those that are minded to receive the Holy Communion, both he and all the people kneeling humbly upon their knees, and saying,

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men; We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we from time to time most grievously have committed, by thought, word and deed, against thy Divine Majesty, provoking most justly thy wrath and indignation against us. We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; The remembrance of them is grievous unto us. Have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us, most merciful Father; For thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, forgive us all that is past; And grant, that we may ever hereafter serve and please thee in newness of life, to the honour and glory of thy Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Then shall the Elder say,

O Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of thy great mercy hast promised forgiveness of sins to all them that with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto thee; have mercy upon us; pardon and deliver us from all our sins, confirm and strengthen us in all goodness, and bring us to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The Collect.

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name, through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Then shall the Elder say,

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty, Everlasting God.

Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name, evermore praising thee, and saying Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of thy glory. Glory be to thee, O Lord most high. *Amen.*

Then shall the Elder say,

WE do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy table. But thou art the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy : Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that our sinful souls and bodies may be made clean by his death, and washed through his most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. *Amen.*

Then the Elder shall say the Prayer of Consecration, as followeth :

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption ; who made there (by his oblation of himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world ; and did institute, and in his holy gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death until his coming again ; hear us, O merciful Father, we most humbly beseech thee, and grant that we, receiving these thy creatures of bread and wine, according to thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed Body and Blood ; who, in the

same night that he was betrayed, took bread;¹ and when he had given thanks, he brake it² and gave it to his disciples, saying, Take eat; this³ is my Body which is given for you; Do this in remembrance of me. Likewise, after supper, he took⁴ the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this; for this⁵ is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins: Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me. Amen.

(1) Here the Elder is to take the Plate of Bread into his hands.

(2) And here to break the Bread.

(3) And here to lay his hand upon all the Bread.

(4) Here he is to take the cup in his hand,

(5) And here to lay his hand upon all the vessels which contain the Wine.

Then shall the Minister first receive the Communion in both kinds himself, and then proceed to deliver the same to the other Ministers in like manner (if any be present) and after that to the People also, in order, into their Hands. And when he delivereth the Bread, he shall say,

THE Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy soul and body unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving.

And the Minister that delivereth the Cup shall say,

THE Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy soul and body unto everlasting life. Drink this in remembrance that Christ's Blood was shed for thee, and be thankful.

[If the consecrated Bread or Wine be all spent before all have communicated, the Elder may consecrate more, by repeating the Prayer of Consecration.]

[When all have communicated, the Minister shall return to the Lord's Table, and place upon it what remaineth of the consecrated Elements, covering the same with a fair Linen Cloth.]

Then shall the Elder say the Lord's Prayer, the People repeating after him every Petition.

OUR Father who art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy Name ; Thy Kingdom come ; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven ; give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us ; And lead us not into Temptation, but deliver us from evil : For thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, For ever and ever. *Amen.*

After which shall be said as followeth :

O Lord and heavenly Father, we thy humble servants desire thy Fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving ; most humbly beseeching thee to grant that, by the merits and death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we and all thy whole church may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion. And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto thee ; humbly beseeching thee that all we who are partakers of this holy Communion, may be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction. And although we be unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service : not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offences, through Jesus Christ our Lord : by whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. *Amen.*

Then shall be said,

GLORY be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will towards men. We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee, we give thanks to thee for thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.

O Lord, the only begotten Son Jesu Christ ; O Lord God; Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us.

For thou only art holy, thou only art the Lord, thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father. *Amen.*

Then the Elder, if he see it expedient, may put up an extempore Prayer ; and afterwards shall let the People depart with this Blessing ;

MAY the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord ; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you, and remain with you always. *Amen.*

N. B. If the Elder be straitened for time, he may omit any part of the service, except the prayer of Consecration.

The MINISTRATION of BAPTISM of INFANTS.

The Minister coming to the Font, which is to be filled with pure Water, shall use the following, or some other exhortation suitable to this sacred Office.

DEARLY beloved, forasmuch as all men are conceived and born in sin, and that our Saviour Christ saith, None can enter into the kingdom of God, except he be regenerate and born anew of water and of the Holy Ghost : I beseech you to call upon God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that of his bounteous mercy he will grant to *this Child* that thing which by nature *he* cannot have ; that *he* may be baptized with water and the Holy Ghost, and received into Christ's holy church, and be made a *lively member* of the same.

Then shall the Minister say,

Let us pray.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who of thy great mercy didst save Noah and his family in the ark from perishing by water; and also didst safely lead the children of Israel, thy people, through the Red Sea, figuring thereby thy holy baptism; and by the baptism of thy well beloved Son Jesus Christ in the river Jordan, didst sanctify water for this holy sacrament, We beseech thee, for thine infinite mercies, that thou wilt look upon *this child*: wash *him* and sanctify *him* with the Holy Ghost; that *he* being delivered from thy wrath, may be received into the ark of Christ's church, and being stedfast in faith, joyful through hope, and rooted in love, may so pass the waves of this troublesome world, that finally *he* may come to the land of everlasting life; there to reign with thee, world without end, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

O Merciful God, grant that the old Adam in *this Child* may be so buried, that the new man may be raised up in *him*. *Amen.*

Grant that all carnal affections may die in *him*, and that all things belonging to the Spirit may live and grow in *him*. *Amen.*

Grant that *he* may have power and strength to have victory, and to triumph against the devil, the world, and the flesh. *Amen.*

Grant that whosoever is dedicated to thee by our Office and Ministry, may also be endued with heavenly virtues, and everlastingly rewarded, through thy mercy, O blessed Lord God, who dost live and govern all things, world without end. *Amen.*

ALMIGHTY everliving God, whose most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of our sins, did shed out of his most precious side both water and blood, and gave commandment to his disciples that they should go teach all nations, and baptize them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son,

and of the Holy Ghost, regard we beseech thee, the supplications of thy congregation; sanctify this water for this holy Sacrament; and grant that *this Child*, now to be baptized may receive the fulness of thy grace, and ever remain in the number of thy faithful and elect children, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Then shall the People stand up: and the Minister shall say,

Hear the words of the gospel written by St. Mark, in the tenth chapter, at the thirteenth verse.

THEY brought young children to Christ, that he should touch them. And his disciples rebuked those that brought them; but when Jesus saw it he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily, I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.

Then the Minister shall take the Child into his Hands, and say to the Friends of the Child,
Name this Child,

And then, naming it after them, he shall sprinkle or pour water upon it, or, if desired, immerse it in water, saying,

N. I baptize thee, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. *Amen.*

Then shall be said, all kneeling,

OUR Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven: Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us: And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil. *Amen.*

[Then shall the Minister conclude with extemporary Prayer.]

The Ministration of BAPTISM to such as are of RIPER YEARS.

*The Minister shall use the following, or some other
Exhortation, suitable to this Holy Office.*

DEARLY beloved, forasmuch as all men are conceived and born in sin (and that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and they that are in the flesh cannot please God, but live in sin, committing many actual transgressions :) and that our Saviour Christ saith, None can enter into the kingdom of God, except he be regenerate and born anew of water and of the Holy Ghost : I beseech you to call upon God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that of his bounteous goodness he will grant to *these persons*, that which by nature *they* cannot have ; that *they* may be baptized with water and the Holy Ghost, and received into Christ's holy church, and be made lively members of the same.

Then shall the Minister say,

ALMIGHTY and immortal God, the aid of all that need, the helper of all that flee to thee for succour, the life of them that believe, and the resurrection of the dead ; We call upon thee for *these persons* ; that *they* coming to thy holy baptism, may receive remission of *their* sins by spiritual regeneration. Receive *them*, O Lord, as thou hast promised by thy well-beloved Son, saying, ask, and ye shall receive ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you : So give now unto us that ask ; let us that seek find ; open the gate unto us that knock ; that *these persons* may enjoy the everlasting benediction of thy heavenly washing, and may come to the eternal kingdom which thou hast promised by Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

After which he shall say,

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, heavenly Father, we give thee humble thanks, for that thou hast vouchsafed to call us to the knowledge of thy

grace, and faith in thee ; Increase this knowledge, and confirm this faith in us evermore. Give thy Holy Spirit to *these persons*, that *they* may be born again, and be made *heirs* of everlasting salvation, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Then shall the people stand up, and the Minister shall say,

Hear the words of the Gospel written by St. John, in the third chapter, beginning at the first verse.

THERE was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews : The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God ; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old ? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born ? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof ; but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth : so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

Then the Minister shall speak to the Persons to be baptized, on this wise :

WELL beloved, who *are* come hither, desiring to receive holy Baptism, *ye* have heard how the Congregation hath prayed, that our Lord Jesus Christ would vouchsafe to receive you, and bless you, to release you of your sins, to give you the kingdom of heaven, and everlasting life. And our Lord Jesus Christ hath promised in his holy word, to grant

all those things that we have prayed for : which promise he for his part will most surely keep and perform.

Wherefore, after this promise made by Christ, you must also faithfully for *your* part promise, in the presence of this whole congregation, that you will renounce the devil and all his works, and constantly believe God's holy word, and obediently keep his Commandments.

Then shall the Minister demand of each of the Persons to be baptized, severally,

Quest. **D**OST thou renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same, and the carnal desires of the flesh, so that thou wilt not follow or be led by them ?

Answ. I renounce them all.

Quest. **D**OST thou believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth ? And in Jesus Christ his only begotten Son our Lord ? And that he was conceived by the Holy Ghost ? born of the Virgin Mary ? that he suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified dead and buried : that he rose again the third day ; that he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty ; and from thence shall come again, at the end of the world, to judge the quick and the dead ?

And dost thou believe in the Holy Ghost ; the Holy Catholic Church ; the Communion of Saints ; the Remission of sins ; the Resurrection of the Body ; and everlasting Life after Death ?

Answ. All this I stedfastly believe.

Quest. **W**ILT thou be baptized in this faith ?

Answ. This is my desire.

Quest. **W**ILT thou then obediently keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of thy life ?

Answ. I will endeavour so to do, God being my helper.

Then shall the Minister say,

O Merciful God, grant that the old Adam in these Persons may be so buried, that the new man may be raised up in them. *Amen.*

Grant that all carnal affections may die in them, and that all things belonging to the Spirit may live and grow in them. *Amen.*

Grant that they may have power and strength to have victory, and to triumph against the devil, the world, and the flesh. *Amen.*

Grant that they being here dedicated to thee by our Office and Ministry, may also be endued with heavenly virtues, and everlastingly rewarded, through thy mercy O blessed Lord God, who dost live and govern all things, world, without end. *Amen.*

A Lmighty everliving God, whose most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of our sins, did shed out of his most precious side both water and blood ; and gave commandment to his disciples, that they should go teach all nations, and baptize them, in the Name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost : Regard, we beseech thee, the supplications of this congregation ; and grant that the Persons now to be baptized, may receive the fulness of thy grace, and ever remain in the number of thy faithful and elect children, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Then shall the Minister take each Person to be baptized by the Right Hand ; and placing him conveniently by the Font, according to his Discretion, shall ask the Name ; and then shall sprinkle or pour Water upon him, (or if he desire it, shall immerse him in Water) saying.

N I baptize thee, In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. *Amen.*

Then shall be said the Lord's Prayer, all kneeling.

O UR Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed by thy Name ; Thy kingdom come ; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven ; Give us this day our

daily bread ; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us ; And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. *Amen.*

[Then let the Minister conclude with extemporary Prayer.]



The Form of Solemnization of MATRIMONY.

First, the Banns of all that are to be married together, must be published in the Congregation, three several Sundays, in the time of Divine Service, (unless they be otherwise qualified according to Law) the Minister saying after the accustomed manner,

I Publish the Banns of Marriage between *M.* of — and *N.* of — If any of you know cause or just impediment, why these two persons should not be joined together in holy Matrimony, ye are to declare it: This is the first [*second or third*] time of asking.

At the Day and Time appointed for Solemnization of Matrimony; the Persons to be married, standing together, the Man on the Right Hand, and the Woman on the Left, the Minister shall say,

Dearly beloved, we are gathered together here, in the sight of God, and in the presence of these witnesses, to join together this Man and this Woman in holy Matrimony: which is an honourable estate, instituted of God in the time of man's innocency, signifying unto us the mystical union that is betwixt Christ and his Church: which holy estate Christ adorned and beautified with his presence, and first miracle that he wrought in Cana of Galilee, and is commended of St. Paul to be honourable among all men; and therefore is not by any to be enterprised, or taken in hand unadvisedly, but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, and in the fear of God.

Into which holy estate these two persons present come now to be joined. Therefore if any can shew any just cause why they may not lawfully be joined

together, let him now speak, or else hereafter for ever hold his peace.

And also speaking unto the Persons that are to be married, he shall say,

I Require and charge you both (as you will answer at the dreadful day of judgment, when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed) that if either of you know any impediment why you may not be lawfully joined together in Matrimony, you do now confess it. For be ye well assured, that so many as are coupled together otherwise than God's Word doth allow, are not joined together by God, neither is their Matrimony lawful.

If no impediment be alledged, then shall the Minister say unto the Man,

M. WILT thou have this Woman to thy wedded Wife, to live together after God's ordinance, in the holy estate of Matrimony? Wilt thou love her, comfort her, honour, and keep her, in sickness, and in health; and forsaking all other, keep thee only unto her, so long as ye both shall live?

The Man shall answer,

I will.

Then shall the Minister say unto the Woman,

N. WILT thou have this Man to thy wedded Husband, to live together after God's ordinance, in the holy estate of Matrimony? Wilt thou obey him, serve him, love, honour, and keep him, in sickness and in health; and forsaking all other, keep thee only unto him, so long as you both shall live?

The Woman shall answer,

I will.

Then the Minister shall cause the Man with his Right Hand to take the Woman by her Right Hand, and to say after him as followeth:

I M. take thee N. to be my wedded Wife, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better for

worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness, and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part, according to God's holy ordinance ; and therefore I plight thee my Faith.

Then shall they loose their Hands, and the Woman with her Right Hand taking the Man by his Right Hand, shall likewise say after the Minister :

I *N.* take thee *M.* to be my wedded Husband, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love, cherish, and to obey, till death us do part, according to God's holy ordinance ; and thereto I give thee my Faith.

Then the Minister shall say,

Let us pray.

O Eternal God, Creator and Preserver of all mankind, Giver of all spiritual grace, the Author of everlasting life ; Send thy blessing upon these thy servants, this Man and this Woman, whom we bless in thy Name ; that as Isaac and Rebecca lived faithfully together, so these persons may surely perform and keep the vow and covenant betwixt them made, and may ever remain in perfect love and peace together, and live according to thy laws, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Then shall the Minister join their Right Hands together and say,

Those whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.

FORASMUCH as *M.* and *N.* have consented together in holy wedlock, and have witnessed the same before God and this company, and thereto have pledged their faith either to other, and have declared the same by joining of hands ; I pronounce that they are Man and Wife together, In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. *Amen.*

And the Minister shall add this blessing :

GOD the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, bless, preserve, and keep you ; the

Lord mercifully with his favour look upon you, and so fill you with all spiritual benediction and grace, that ye may so live together in this life, that in the world to come ye may have life everlasting. *Amen.*

Then the Minister shall say,

OUR Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name ; Thy kingdom come ; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven : Give us this day our daily bread ; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us : And lead us not into temptation ; but deliver us from evil. *Amen.*

Then shall the Minister say.

O GOD of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, bless this man and this woman, and sow the seed of eternal life in their hearts, that whatsoever in thy holy Word they shall profitably learn they may indeed fulfil the same. Look, O Lord, mercifully upon them from heaven, and bless them. And as thou didst send thy blessing upon Abraham and Sarah, to their great comfort ; so vouchsafe to send thy blessing upon this man and this woman ; that they obeying thy will, and always being in safety under thy protection, may abide in thy love unto their lives end, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

O GOD, who by thy mighty power hast made all things of nothing, who also (after other things set in order) didst appoint that out of man (created after thine own image and similitude) woman should take her beginning : and knitting them together, didst teach that it should never be lawful to put asunder those whom thou by Matrimony hadst made one ; O God, who hast consecrated the state of Matrimony to such an excellent mystery, that in it is signified and represented the spiritual marriage and unity betwixt Christ and his Church ; Look mercifully upon this man, and this woman ; that both this man may love his wife, according to thy Word (as Christ did love his Spouse the Church, who gave himself for it, lov-

ing and cherishing it, even as his own flesh) and also that this woman may be loving and amiable, faithful and obedient to her husband : and in all quietness, sobriety, and peace, be a follower of holy and godly matrons. O Lord, bless them both, and grant them to inherit thy everlasting kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Then shall the Minister say,

ALmighty God, who at the beginning did create our first parents, Adam and Eve, and did sanctify and join them together in marriage ; Pour upon you the riches of his grace, sanctify and bless you, that ye may please him both in body and soul, and live together in holy love unto your lives end. *Amen.*



The Order of the BURIAL of the DEAD.

N. B. The following or some other solemn Service shall be used.

The Minister meeting the Corpse, and going before it shall say,

I Am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord : He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live : and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die. John. xi. 25, 26.

I Know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God : whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another. Job xix. 25, 26, 27.

WE brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away ; blessed be the Name of the Lord. 1 Tim. vi. 7. Job i. 21.

At the Grave, when the Corpse is laid in the earth, the Minister shall say,

MAN that is born of a woman hath but a short time to live, and is full of misery. He cometh

up, and is cut down like a flower ; he fleeth as it were shadow, and never continueth in one stay.

In the midst of life we are in death ; of whom may we seek for succour, but of thee, O Lord, who for our sins art justly displeased ?

Yet, O Lord God most holy, O Lord most mighty, O holy and most merciful Saviour, deliver us not into the bitter pains of eternal death.

Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts : shut not thy merciful ears to our prayers, but spare us, Lord most holy, O God most mighty, O holy and merciful Saviour, thou most worthy Judge eternal, suffer us not at our last hour for any pains of death to fall from thee.

Then shall be said,

I Heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write ; From henceforth blessed are the dead who die in the Lord : even so saith the Spirit ; for they rest from their labours.

Then shall the Minister say,

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

OUR Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name ; Thy kingdom come ; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven : Give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us ; And lead us not into temptation ; But deliver us from evil. *Amen.*

The Collect.

O Merciful God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the resurrection and the life ; in whom whosoever believeth shall live, though he die ; and whosoever liveth and believeth in him, shall not die eternally : We meekly beseech thee, O Father, to raise us from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness ; that when we shall depart this life, we may rest in him ; and at the general resurrection on the last day, may be found acceptable in thy sight,

and receive that blessing which thy well-beloved Son shall then pronounce to all that love and fear thee, saying, Come, ye blessed children of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world. Grant this, we beseech thee, O merciful Father, through Jesus Christ our Mediator and Redeemer. *Amen.*

THE grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. *Amen.*

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The Form and Manner of Making and Ordaining of BISHOPS, ELDERS, and DEACONS.

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The Form and Manner of Making of DEACONS.

[When the day appointed by the Bishop is come, there shall be a Sermon, or Exhortation, declaring the Duty and Office of such as come to be admitted Deacons.]

After which, one of the Elders shall present unto the Bishop the Persons to be ordained Deacons: and their Names being read aloud, the Bishop shall say unto the People :

BRETHREN, if there be any of you, who knoweth any impediment or crime in any of these persons presented to be ordained Deacons, for the which he ought not to be admitted to that office, let him come forth in the name of God, and shew what the crime or impediment is.

[If any Crime or impediment be objected, the Bishop shall surcease from ordaining that Person, until such Time as the Party accused shall be found clear of that crime.]

Then shall be said the following Collect and Epistle.

The Collect.

ALMIGHTY God, who by thy Divine Providence hast appointed divers orders of ministers in thy church, and didst inspire thine apostles to choose into the order of Deacons thy first martyr St. Stephen, with others : Mercifully behold these thy servants now called to the like office and administration ; replenish them so with the truth of thy doctrine, and adorn them with innocency of life, that both by word and good example, they may faithfully serve thee in this office, to the glory of thy name, and the edification of thy church, through the merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and for ever. *Amen.*

The Epistle. 1 Tim. iii. 8—13.

LIKEWISE must the Deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre ; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved, then let them use the office of a Deacon, being found blameless. Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the Deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a Deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Then shall the Bishop examine every one of them that are to be ordained, in the presence of the People, after this manner following :

DO you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, to take upon you the office of the ministry in the church of Christ, to serve God for the promoting of his glory, and the edifying of his people ?

Answer. I trust so.

The Bishop.

DO you unfeignedly believe all the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testament ?

Answer. I do believe them.

The Bishop.

WILL you diligently read or expound the same unto the people whom you shall be appointed to serve ?

Answer. I will.

The Bishop.

IT appertaineth to the office of a Deacon to assist the Elder in Divine Service, and especially when he ministereth the holy Communion to help him in the distribution thereof, and to read and expound the holy Scriptures ; to instruct the youth, and in the absence of the Elder, to baptize. And furthermore, it is his office, to search for the sick, poor, and impotent, that they may be visited and relieved.— Will you do this gladly and willingly ?

Answer. I will do so, by the help of God.

The Bishop.

WILL you apply all your diligence to frame and fashion your own lives (and the lives of your families) according to the doctrine of Christ ; and to make (both) yourselves (and them) as much as in you lieth, wholesome examples of the flock of Christ ?

Answer. I will do so, the Lord being my helper.

The Bishop.

WILL you reverently obey them to whom the charge and government over you is committed, following with a glad mind and will, their godly admonitions ?

Answer. I will endeavour so to do, the Lord being my helper.

Then the Bishop laying his Hands severally upon the Head of every one of them shall say,

TAKE thou authority to execute the Office of a Deacon in the church of God ; In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.
Amen.

Then shall the Bishop deliver to every one of them the Holy Bible, saying,

TAKE thou authority to read the holy Scriptures in the church of God, and to preach the same. *Then one of them appointed by the Bishop shall read the Gospel. Luke xii. 35—38.*

LET your loins be girded about, and your lights burning, and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching, Verily I say unto you, That he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.

[Then shall the Bishop proceed in the Communion, and all that are ordained shall receive the holy communion.]

The Communion ended, immediately before the Benediction, shall be said these Collects following :

ALMIGHTY God, giver of all good things, who of thy great goodness hast vouchsafed to accept and take these thy servants into the office of Deacons in thy church : Make them, we beseech thee, O Lord, to be modest, humble, and constant in their ministration, and to have a ready will to observe all spiritual discipline ; that they having always the testimony of a good conscience, and continuing ever stable and strong in thy Son Christ, may so well behave themselves in this inferior office, that they may be found worthy to be called unto the higher ministries in thy church, through the same thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ ; to whom be glory and honour world without end. *Amen.*

PREVENT us, O Lord, in all our doings, with thy most gracious favour, and further us with thy continual help, that in all our works begun,

continued, and ended in thee, we may glorify thy holy Name, and finally by thy mercy, obtain everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

THE peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you, and remain with you always. *Amen.*



The Form and Manner of Ordaining of ELDERS.

[When the Day appointed by the Bishop, is come, there shall be a Sermon, or Exhortation, declaring the Duty and Office of such as come to be admitted Elders ; how necessary that Order is in the Church of Christ, and also how the people ought to esteem them in their office.]

After which one of the Elders shall present unto the Bishop all them that are to be ordained, and say,

I PRESENT unto you these persons present, to be ordained Elders.

Then their Names being read aloud, the Bishop shall say unto the People :

BRETHREN, these are they whom we purpose, God willing, this day to ordain Elders. For after due examination, we find not to the contrary, but that they are lawfully called to this function and ministry, and that they are persons meet for the same. But if there be any of you, who knoweth any impediment or crime in any of them, for the which he ought not to be received into this holy ministry, let him come forth in the name of God, and shew what the crime or impediment is.

[If any Crime or Impediment be objected, the Bishop shall surcease from ordaining that Person, until such Time as the Party accused shall be found clear of that Crime.]

Then shall be said the Collect, Epistle, and Gospel, as followeth.

The Collect.

ALMIGHTY God, giver of all good things, who by thy Holy Spirit hast appointed divers orders of ministers in thy church; Mercifully behold these thy servants now called to the office of Elders, and replenish them so with the truth of thy doctrine, and adorn them with innocency of life, that both by word and good example they may faithfully serve thee in this office, to the glory of thy name, and the edification of thy church, through the merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth, with thee and the Holy Ghost, world without end. *Amen.*

The Epistle. Ephes. iv. 7—31.

UNTO every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first, into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended, is the same also that ascended up far above all things.) And he gave some apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

After this, shall be read for the Gospel, part of the Tenth Chapter of St. John.

St. John x. 1—16.

VERILY verily I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheep-fold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door, is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calleth his own sheep by name and leadeth them out. And when

he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. And a stranger will they know not follow, but flee from him, for they know not the voice of strangers. This parable spake Jesus unto them, but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them. Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily verily I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door : by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief cometh not but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy : I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. I am the good Shepherd : the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the Shepherd, whose own the sheep, are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth, and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. I am the good Shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father : and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold : them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd.

And that done, the Bishop shall say unto them as hereafter followeth :

YOU have heard, brethren, as well in your private examination, as in the exhortation which was now made to you, and in the holy lessons taken out of the Gospel, and the writings of the Apostles of what dignity, and of how great importance this office is, whereunto ye are called. And now again we exhort you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you have in remembrance, into how high a dignity, and to how weighty an office and charge ye are called :

That is to say, to be messengers, watchmen, and stewards of the Lord, to teach, and to premonish, to feed and provide for the Lord's family, to seek for Christ's sheep that are dispersed abroad, and for his children who are in the midst of this naughty world, that they may be saved through Christ for ever.

Have always therefore printed in your remembrance, how great a treasure is committed to your charge. For they are the sheep of Christ, which he bought with his death, and for whom he shed his blood. The church and congregation whom you must serve, is his Spouse, and his body. And if it shall happen, the same church, or any member thereof, do take any hurt or hinderance by reason of your negligence, ye know the greatness of the fault, and also the horrible punishment that will ensue. Wherefore consider with yourselves the end of the ministry towards the children of God, towards the Spouse and body of Christ; and see that you never cease your labour, your care and diligence, until you have done all that lieth in you, according to your bounden duty, to bring all such as are or shall be committed to your charge, unto that agreement in the faith and knowledge of God, and to that ripeness and perfectness of age in Christ, that there be no place left among you, either for error in religion, or for viciousness in life.

Forasmuch then as your office is both of so great excellency, and of so great difficulty, ye see with how great care and study ye ought to apply yourselves, as well that ye may shew yourselves dutiful and thankful unto that Lord, who hath placed you in so high a dignity; as also to beware that neither you yourselves offend, nor be occasion that others offend. Howbeit ye cannot have a mind and will thereto of yourselves; for that will and ability is given of God alone; therefore ye ought, and have need to pray earnestly for his Holy Spirit. And seeing that you cannot by any other means compass the doing of so weighty a work,

pertaining to the salvation of man, but with doctrine and exhortation taken out of the holy Scriptures, and with a life agreeable to the same : consider how studious ye ought to be in reading and learning the Scriptures, and in framing the manners both of yourselves, and of them that specially pertain unto you, according to the rule of the same Scriptures ; and for this self-same cause, how ye ought to forsake and set aside (as much as you may) all worldly cares and studies.

We have good hope that you have all weighed and pondered these things with yourselves long before this time ; and that you have clearly determined, by God's grace, to give yourselves wholly to this office, whereunto it hath pleased God to call you : so that, as much as lieth in you, you will apply yourselves wholly to this one thing, and draw all your cares and studies this way, and that you will continually pray to God the Father, by the mediation of our only Saviour Jesus Christ, for the heavenly assistance of the Holy Ghost ; that by daily reading and weighing of the Scriptures, ye may wax riper and stronger in your ministry ; and that ye may so endeavour yourselves from time to time to sanctify the lives of you and your's, and to fashion them after the rule and doctrine of Christ, that ye may be wholesome and godly examples and patterns for the people to follow.

And now that this present congregation of Christ, here assembled, may also understand your minds and wills in these things, and that this your promise may the more move you to do your duties : ye shall answer plainly to these things which we, in the Name of God and his Church, shall demand of you touching the same.

DO you think in your heart, that you are truly called, according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the order of Elders ?

Answer. I think so.

The Bishop.

ARE you persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain sufficiently all doctrine required of necessity for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ? And are you determined, out of the said Scriptures to instruct the people committed to your charge, and to teach nothing as required of necessity to eternal salvation, but that which you shall be persuaded, may be concluded and proved by the Scripture?

Answer. I am so persuaded, and have so determined, by God's grace.

The Bishop.

WILL you then give your faithful diligence, always so to minister the doctrine and sacraments, and the discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded?

Answer. I will so do, by the help of the Lord.

The Bishop.

WILL you be ready with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's word; and to use both public and private monitions, and exhortations, as well to the sick as to the whole within your district, as need shall require, and occasion shall be given?

Answer. I will, the Lord being my helper.

The Bishop.

WILL you be diligent in prayers, and in reading of the holy Scriptures, and in such studies as help to the knowledge of the same, laying aside the study of the world and the flesh?

Answer. I will endeavour so to do, the Lord being my helper.

The Bishop.

WILL you be diligent to frame and fashion your own selves, and your families, according to the doctrine of Christ; and to make both yourselves and them, as much as in you lieth, wholesome examples and patterns to the flock of Christ?

Answer. I shall apply myself thereto, the Lord being my helper.

The Bishop.

WILL you maintain and set forwards, as much as lieth in you, quietness, peace, and love among all Christian People, and especially among them that are or shall be committed to your charge?

Answer. I will so do, the Lord being my helper.

The Bishop.

WILL you reverently obey your chief ministers, unto whom is committed the charge and government over you; following with a glad mind and will their godly admonitions, submitting yourselves to their godly judgments?

Answer. I will so do, the Lord being my helper.

Then shall the Bishop, standing up, say,

ALMIGHTY God, who hath given you this will to do all these things; grant also unto you strength and power to perform the same; that he may accomplish his work which he hath begun in you, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

[After this the Congregation shall be desired, secretly in their Prayers, to make their humble Supplications to God for all these Things: for the which Prayers there shall be silence kept for a Space.]

After which, shall be said by the Bishop, (the Persons to be ordained Elders, all kneeling) Veni, Creator, Spiritus, the Bishop beginning, and the Elders and others that are present, answering by Verses, as followeth:

COME, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,

And lighten with celestial fire,

Thou the anointing Spirit art,

Who dost thy sev'nfold gifts impart;

Thy blessed Unction from above

Is comfort, life, and fire of love.

Enable with perpetual light

The dullness of our blinded sight;

Anoint and cheer our soiled face

With the abundance of thy grace:

Keep far our foes, give peace at home,
Where thou art Guide no ill can come.

Teach us to know the Father, Son,
And thee of both, to be but one ;

That through the ages all along,
This may be our endless song ;

Praise to thy eternal merit,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

That done, the Bishop shall pray in this wise, and say,

Let us pray.

ALMIGHTY God, and heavenly Father, who of thine infinite love and goodness towards us, hast given to us thy only and most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ to be our Redeemer, and the Author of everlasting life : who after he had made perfect our redemption by his death, and was ascended into heaven, sent abroad into the world his Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Doctors, and Pastors : by whose labour and ministry he gathered together a great flock in all parts of the world, to set forth the eternal praise of thy holy name : for these so great benefits of thy eternal goodness, and for that thou hast vouchsafed to call these thy servants here present to the same Office and Ministry appointed for the salvation of mankind, we render unto thee most hearty thanks, we praise and worship thee : and we humbly beseech thee by the same thy blessed Son, to grant unto all, who either here or elsewhere call upon thy Name, that we may continue to shew ourselves thankful unto thee for these and all other thy benefits ; and that we may daily increase and go forward in the knowledge and faith of thee and thy Son by the Holy Spirit. So that as well by these thy Ministers, as by them over whom they shall be appointed thy Ministers, thy holy Name may be for ever glorified, and thy blessed kingdom enlarged, through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord ; who liveth and reigneth with thee in the unity of the same Holy Spirit world without end. *Amen.*

When this Prayer is done, the Bishop, with the Elders present, shall lay their Hands severally upon the Head of every one that receiveth the order of Elders: the Receivers humbly kneeling upon their Knees, and the Bishop saying,

THE Lord pour upon thee the Holy Ghost for the Office and Work of an Elder in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands. And be thou a faithful Dispenser of the Word of God, and of his holy Sacraments; in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. *Amen.*

Then the Bishop shall deliver to every one of them, kneeling, the Bible into his hand, saying,

TAKE thou authority to preach the Word of God, and to administer the holy Sacraments in the congregation.

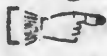
Then the Bishop shall say,

MOST merciful Father, we beseech thee to send upon these thy servants thy heavenly blessing; that they may be clothed with righteousness, and thy Word spoken by their mouths, may have such success, that it may never be spoken in vain. Grant also, that we may have grace to hear and receive what they shall deliver out of thy most holy Word, or agreeable to the same, as the means of our salvation; and that in all our words and deeds we may seek thy glory, and the increase of thy kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

PREVENT us, O Lord, in all our doings, with thy most gracious favour, and further us with thy continual help; that in all our works begun, continued and ended in thee, we may glorify thy holy Name, and finally, by thy mercy, obtain everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

THE Peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord: And the blessing of God Almighty.

ty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you, and remain with you always. *Amen.*

[ If on the same day the Order of Deacons be given to some, and that of Elders to others: the Deacons shall be first presented, and then the Elders. The Collects shall both be used; first, that for Deacons, then that for Elders. The Epistle shall be Ephes. iv. 7. to 13. as before in this office. Immediately after which, they that are to be ordained Deacons shall be examined, and ordained, as is above prescribed. Then one of them having read the Gospel, which shall be St. John x. 1. as before in this Office: they that are to be ordained Elders, shall likewise be examined and ordained, as in this Office before appointed.]

The Form of Ordaining a BISHOP.

The Collect.

ALMIGHTY God, who by thy Son Jesus Christ didst give to thy holy Apostles many excellent gifts, and didst charge them to feed thy flock: give grace, we beseech thee, to all the Ministers and Pastors of thy Church, that they may diligently preach thy Word, and duly administer the godly Discipline thereof; and grant to the people, that they may obediently follow the same; that all may receive the crown of everlasting glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Then shall be read by one of the Elders.

The Epistle. Acts xx. 17. 35.

FROM Miletus Paul sent to Ephesus, and called the Elders of the Church. And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears and temptations, which befel me by the lying in wait of the Jews; and how I kept back nothing that was pro-

fitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And now behold, I go bound in the Spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there; save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying, That bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God. And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the Kingdom of God, shall see my face no more. Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you Overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years, I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among them who are sanctified. I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel: yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak; and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

Then another shall read.

The Gospel. St. John xxi. 15—17.

JESUS saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these ? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord ; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith to him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me ? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord ; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me ? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me ? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things : thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

Or this : St. Matth. xxviii. 18—20.

JESUS came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them, In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you ; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

After the Gospel and the Sermon are ended, the elected

Person shall be presented by two Elders unto the Bishop, saying,

WE present unto you this godly Man to be ordained a Bishop.

Then the Bishop shall move the Congregation present to pray, saying thus to them :

BRETHREN, it is written in the Gospel of Saint Luke, That our Saviour Christ continued the whole night in prayer, before he did choose and send forth his twelve Apostles. It is written also in the Acts of the Apostles, That the Disciples who were at Antioch, did fast and pray, before they laid hands on Paul and Barnabas, and sent them forth. Let us therefore, following the example of our Saviour Christ, and his Apostles, first fall to Prayer

before we admit, and send forth this person presented unto us, to the work, whereunto we trust the Holy Ghost hath called him.

Then shall be said this Prayer following :

ALMIGHTY God, giver of all good things, who by thy Holy Spirit hast appointed divers orders of ministers in thy church ; mercifully behold this thy servant now called to the work and ministry of a Bishop, and replenish him so with the truth of thy doctrine, and adorn him with innocency of life, that, both by word and deed, he may faithfully serve thee in this office, to the glory of thy Name, and the edifying and well-governing of thy church, through the merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, world without end, Amen.

Then the Bishop shall say to him that is to be ordained.

BROTHER, forasmuch as the holy Scripture commands that we should not be hasty in laying on hands, and admitting any person to government in the church of Christ, which he hath purchased with no less price than the effusion of his own blood ; before I admit you to this administration I will examine you on certain articles, to the end that the congregation present may have a trial, and bear witness how you are minded to behave yourself in the church of God.

ARE you persuaded that you are truly called to this ministration, according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ ?

Answer. I am so persuaded,

The Bishop.

ARE you persuaded that the holy Scriptures contain sufficiently all doctrine required of necessity for eternal salvation, through faith in Jesus Christ ? And are you determined out of the same holy Scriptures to instruct the people committed to your charge, and to teach or maintain nothing as required of necessity to eternal salvation, but that which you shall be

persuaded may be concluded and proved by the same?

Answer. I am so persuaded, and determined by God's grace.

The Bishop.

WILL you then faithfully exercise yourself in the same holy Scriptures, and call upon God by prayer for the true understanding of the same, so as you may be able by them to teach and exhort with wholesome doctrine, and to withstand and convince the gainsayers?

Answer. I will so do, by the help of God.

The Bishop.

ARE you ready, and with faithful diligence, to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's Word, and both privately and openly to call upon and encourage others to the same?

Answer. I am ready, the Lord being my helper.

The Bishop.

WILL you deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, that you may shew yourself in all things an example of good works unto others, that the adversary may be ashamed, having nothing to say against you?

Answer. I will so do, the Lord being my helper.

The Bishop.

WILL you maintain and set forward, as much as shall lie in you, quietness, love, and peace among all men; and such as shall be unquiet, disobedient, and criminal within your district, correct and punish according to such authority as you have by God's Word, and as shall be committed unto you?

Answer. I will so do, by the help of God.

The Bishop.

WILL you be faithful in ordaining, sending, or laying hands upon others?

Answer. I will so be, by the help of God.

The Bishop.

WILL you shew yourself gentle, and be merciful, for Christ's sake, to poor and needy people, and to all strangers destitute of help?

Answer. I will so shew myself, by God's help.

Then the Bishop shall say,

ALMIGHTY God, our heavenly Father, who hath given you a good will to do all these things, grant also unto you strength and power to perform the same; that, he accomplishing in you the good work which he hath begun, you may be found perfect and irreprehensible at the last day, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Then shall Veni, Creator Spiritus, be said.

COME, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,
And lighten with celestial fire.

Thou the anointing Spirit art,
Who dost thy sev'nfold gifts impart;
Thy blessed Unction from above,
Is comfort, life, and fire of love.
Enable with perpetual light
The dulness of our blinded sight;
Anoint and cheer our soiled face
With the abundance of thy grace;
Keep far our foes, give peace at home;
Where thou art Guide no ill can come.
Teach us to know the Father, Son,
And thee of both, to be but one;
That through the ages all along,
This may be our endless song,
Praise to thy eternal merit,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
That ended, the Bishop shall say,
Lord, hear our prayer.

Answer. And let our cry come unto thee.

Bishop.

Let us pray.

ALMIGHTY God and most merciful Father, who of thine infinite goodness hast given thine

only and dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ to be our Redeemer, and the Author of everlasting life, who, after that he had made perfect our redemption by his death, and was ascended into heaven, poured down his gifts abundantly upon men, making some Apostles; some, prophets; some, Evangelists; some, Pastors, and Doctors, to the edifying and making perfect this church; grant, we beseech thee, to this thy servant such grace, that he may evermore be ready to spread abroad thy gospel, the glad tidings of reconciliation with thee, and use the authority given him, not to destruction, but to salvation; not to hurt, but to help; so that as a wise and faithful servant, giving to thy Family their portion in due season, he may at last be received into everlasting joy, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who, with thee and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth, One God, world without end. *Amen.*

Then the Bishops, and Elders present, shall lay their Hands upon the Head of the elected Person kneeling before them upon his Knees, the Bishop saying,

RECEIVE the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a Bishop in the church of God, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands, in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. *Amen.* And remember that thou stir up the grace of God which is given thee by this imposition of our hands; for God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and love, and soberness.

Then the Bishop shall deliver him the Bible, saying,

GIVE heed unto reading, exhortation, and doctrine. Think upon the things contained in this book. Be diligent in them, that the increase coming thereby may be manifest unto all men. Take heed unto thyself, and to thy doctrine; for by so doing thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee. Be to the flock of Christ a shepherd, not a wolf; feed them, devour them not. Hold up the weak, heal the sick, bind up the broken, bring again

the outcasts, seek the lost. Be so merciful, that you be not too remiss ; so minister discipline that you forget not mercy ; that when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, you may receive the never-fading crown of glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

[Then the Bishop shall administer the Lord's Supper ; with whom the newly-ordained Bishop, and other Persons present, shall communicate.]

Immediately before the Benediction, shall be said the following Prayers.

MOST merciful Father, we beseech thee to send down upon this thy servant thy heavenly blessing, and so endue him with thy Holy Spirit, that he, preaching thy word, may not only be earnest to reprove, beseech, and rebuke with all patience and doctrine, but also may be to such as believe a wholesome example in word, in conversation, in love, in faith, in chastity, and in purity ; that faithfully fulfilling his course, at the latter day he may receive the crown of righteousness laid up by the Lord, the righteous Judge, who liveth and reigneth, One God, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, world without end. *Amen.*

PREVENT us, O Lord, in all our doings with thy most gracious favour, and further us with thy continual help, that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in thee, we may glorify thy holy Name, and finally, by thy mercy, obtain everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

THE Peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord ; And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you, and remain with you always. *Amen.*

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